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# TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN



*By the Same Author*

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# TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

TELLING OF HIS THOUSAND-MILE JOURNEY  
AFOOT IN THE PENINSULA AT THE BE-  
GINNING OF THE THIRD YEAR OF THE  
SECOND REPUBLIC : OF ALL HE SAW AND  
ENCOUNTERED ON THE ROAD FROM OVIEDO  
IN ASTURIAS THROUGH OLD AND NEW  
CASTILE AND ANDALUSIA TO CADIZ AND  
GIBRALTAR ; DETAILING PARTICULARLY  
WHAT HE ATE AND WHAT HE DIDN'T,  
AND HOW HE SUFFERED, HAVING NOTHING  
BETWEEN HIM AND ABSOLUTE WANT BUT  
AN UNLIMITED SUPPLY OF MONEY

*by*

MATT MARSHALL

(author of 'The Travels of Tramp-Royal')

'Allons ! the road is before us !  
It is *safe*—I have tried it—  
My own feet have tried it well—  
Be not detained !'

—WALT WHITMAN'S  
'Song of the Open Road'

EDINBURGH AND LONDON  
WM. BLACKWOOD & SONS LTD.

1935

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*To*  
*those who*  
*can never visit*  
*their*  
CASTLES IN SPAIN



## THE LOST ADVENTURE

(A Song to Incite)

*When your dinner pail and tea can, with your paper  
and your pipe,  
Have been laid up in your locker with your coat,  
And that ' Monday morning ' feeling has you squirming  
in its gripe,  
And your gaffer's chronic grumbling gets your goat ;  
When the belts uplift their babel and the running shaft  
sings o'er you,  
When, machine-like, you attend to your machine,  
Then the Visions rise unconjured from the chuck and  
jig before you,  
Then the Voices tell your heart what might have been :*

Ah, you might have filed your fetters and laid off  
your dungarees,  
And you might have done a bunk and saved your  
soul ;  
And you might have faced the fury of a thousand  
swinging seas,  
And you might have blazed a pathway to the Pole.  
And you might have lifted Eden down behind the  
high horizon,  
Where the Trades through coco-palm and flame-  
tree croon,  
And the deep plays organ anthems on the ringing  
reef it dies on,  
And the sunset turns to gold the blue lagoon !

## THE LOST ADVENTURE

Yes, your dearest dreams of boyhood might have all  
    been realised

    If you'd boldly taken chances when they came ;  
But you didn't dare to take 'em—people *might* have  
    criticised,

    And besides, your bosom crony wasn't game.  
So you rot at home and hunger whilst the rôles you  
    haven't pluck for

    Pass in pageant through the back-blocks of your  
    brain ;

And you ask yourself is solace what those Malays  
    run amuck for,

    And if nothing short of crime can keep you sane !

While you hang about the billiard-room and help to  
    prop a wall,

    With a woodbine loosely pendent from your lip,  
Every minute sees you hearken to the Wilderness's  
    call—

    To the creaking fo'c'sle timbers of a ship.  
And the fag reek seems to thicken round the bookies  
    and the punters

    To the semblance of a haze above a swamp,  
Where you follow, eager-footed, in the trail of  
    orchid-hunters,

    Through the fever-freighted gloom and hothouse  
    damp !

When you lie at nights and listen to the tooting of  
    the trains,

    Your romantic second self rides far away  
Over cactus-crowded levels of interminable plains  
    To a little Spanish maid—in Santa Fé !

## THE LOST ADVENTURE

And you thump a sleepless pillow that is hot enough  
to cook on,  
Till the planets and the stars begin to pale—  
As they pale above the timber by the head lakes of  
the Yukon,  
On the Dyea Beach—to—Dawson City trail !

It has soured your whole existence, it will dog you  
all your life,  
Though of late you've shut it out with quite a  
slam ;  
For you've saved a little money and you've bought  
a little wife,  
And you've paid the first instalment on a pram !  
Thus you put adventure from you—though its  
charms outvie your spouse's—  
Save to read it in a book on tram or train,  
Or to watch its reeling riot from the stalls in picture-  
houses,  
In the dark, at second hand, without the pain !

By the roads you've never ridden, by the seas you've  
never sailed,  
By the low-hung Southern Cross you'll never see ;  
By the ships upon their courses to the ports you've  
never hailed,  
By the restless, work-chained feet you'll never free,  
It is borne in upon you—and, by God, it sets you  
quaking,  
When you walk alone at morning, noon, or night—  
That your fettered soul and manhood were not worth  
the Master's making,  
And—you've basked beneath a baleful upas-blight !





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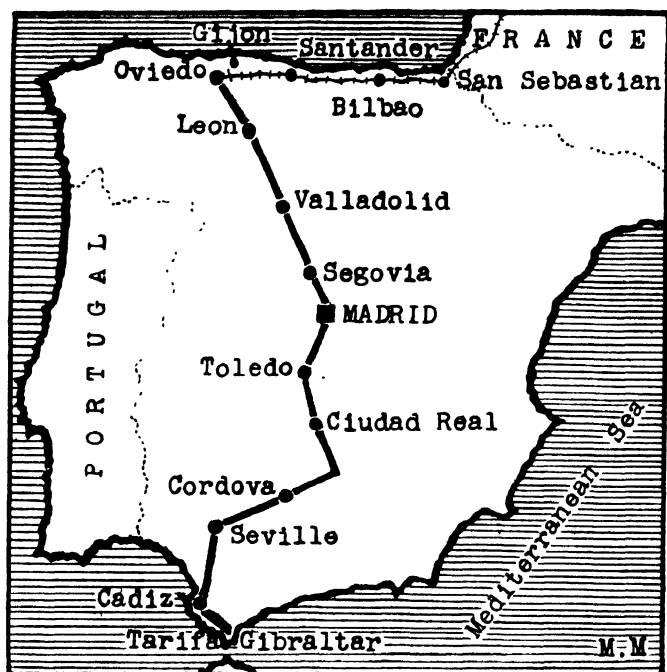
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TRAMP-ROYAL'S ROUTE

## LAP THE FIRST

### THE WORLD OF SPAIN

Rich and strange—The Spanish scene—The Dominie talks—  
Deciding to be a Timon—Arrival at Oviedo—The café habit—  
Oviedons in uniform—Damoclean swords—The Spanish  
señorita—Familiar shop signs—The *comida*—The sleep of  
the damned.

SPAIN !

On the instant, as at the uttering of a cabalistic word, I am borne back on the magic carpet of memory to a world rich and strange as that of the *Arabian Nights*.

Priests, gypsies, smugglers, muleteers, armed guards, goatherds, woodcutters, innkeepers, nuns, bull-fighters, Dons, duennas, hidalgos, Monarchists and Republicans ; with flowing robes, flashing swords, fluttering fans ; in smocks, cloaks, tunics, mantillas, sombreros, scarlet sashes and silken shawls ; booted, bare-footed, and cross-gartered : all, like the *dramatis personæ* of a mediæval play or pageant, crowd and jostle on the sunlit stage of my remembrance.

And from the rout breaks forth a medley of sounds and cries. I hear the whine of cripples begging alms “ *Por Dios, señor !* ” ; the “ Hee-haw ! Hee-ah-haw ! ” of little active donkeys, and the “ *Arre, burra !* ” of their big lazy riders ; the “ *Agua ! Quién quiere agua ?* ” of water-sellers ; the “ *Peseta ! Una peseta !* ” of lottery-ticket vendors ; the bellowing of bulls, the screaming of horses, the jingling of

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

galloping mule-teams. And over everything, drowning the chorussing of frogs and the incessant singing of cicadas, comes, like a muezzin call, "*Mañana ! Mañana ! Mañana !*"

And smells and odours assail me. On the wind is wafted the sickly-sweet blood-reek of the arena. For a second the air is made unbreathable by the stench of *aguardiente*, to pass and give place to the fume of frying *churros*, the tang of garlic and *aceite*, the fragrance of wild mint and thyme, the aroma of caballeros' tobacco, and the haunting, elusive, ever-to-be-remembered perfume of señoritas' hair.

And the Spanish scene bursts on my sight. Through it, on splendid ways, I move again : across dusty deserts, up alpine valleys, over snow-capped sierras, by hurtling mountain torrents and by parched rivers of the plain. And the sun shines and shines. Great thirsts torment me. In *paseos* and *alamedas* I seek the shade. Fondas and posadas house me. I eat of strange dishes and drink strange drinks. I attend bull-fights and fairs. I loiter, marvelling, in Moorish gateways and under Roman aqueducts. I take adobe villages, hilltop towns and walled cities in my stride. I encounter snakes and lizards and locusts. I see sugar-cane and cactus and aloes, and eucalyptus trees and cork trees and orange trees, and olives and vines and date-palms and pomegranates. And I watch the sun sink in the Bay of Biscay and the moon rise over the Mediterranean.

But it was really the Dominie, you know, who gave me the idea. I had not thought of Spain before.

You remember the Dominie ? You have not forgotten the tall old kleptomaniacal windbag toggled up like a minister who attached himself to me in

Galloway, as related in my book, *Tramp-Royal on the Toby*? The magnet to trouble and the lodestone to misadventure, eh? Sure!

Well, since you remember that, you will remember how he and I put up for the night at a lodging-house in the purlieus of the Low Vennel in Wigtown, and how, while he talked, I paid and did the cooking. Anyway, it was of Spain that he talked.

"*Hijo mío*," says he; and I was thankful we happened to be the only lodgers there that night, otherwise the Dominie's loquacity, coupled with his intermittent outbursts of bad Spanish, would have won him a sudden seat on the hotplate: "*Hijo mío*, were I in your shoes I should forthwith hie me to Spain. Spain: the peninsula, that is to say, separated from the European continent and the rest of Heathendom by the Pyrenean system of terrestrial protuberances, and cut off from all else by the circumambient wave; and which the Greeks of old referred to by the appellation of Iberia—from the *Iberi*, *amigo mío*, who were its ancient, nay, its aboriginal inhabitants, and whose descendants are the present-day Basques, whose language is the same as that which was spoken long ago in Atlantis—and known to the Romans as Hispania, or Land of Rabbits, whence derives the modern title, España. I should, I repeat, hie me to that sunny terrain, were my pedal extremities encased as yours are. *Hijo de demonio*! To follow in the footsteps of the immortal *pícaro*, Gil Blas de Santillane, and travel the route of the Knight of the Sorry Figure: the Ingenius Gentleman, Don Quixote de La Mancha, and his squire, Sancho Panza. *Válgame Dios! y Santa Maria Purísima*!—that were paradise enow! To travel, I mean, with nothing between me and absolute want but an unlimited supply of money."



## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

So he talked. And the fried banana that he inveigled me into cooking for him served but to lubricate the flow.

And when another Springtime was come, that idea germinated and grew and grew until I could think of nothing else.

“Why not?” I asked myself. “Why shouldn’t you do as the Dominie advised, Tramp-Royal? You have seen Britain—how about faring abroad? You have the time, you have the feet, and, wonder of wonders, you have the wherewithal. Besides, you need a change. An entire change of scene and climate is your most urgent requirement. For—let us not mince words—your condition is grave, Tramp-Royal. Grave. I tell you this not as a physician but as a friend. You totter on the brink of a complete breakdown. Total collapse is inevitable. Your entire constitution, mental and physical, is being sapped and undermined by your present luxurious mode of living. In heaven’s name, Tramp-Royal, act before it is too late! Stir yourself, man! Cut out all this feasting in spikes, this gormandising in dosshouses, these orgies and carousals in howffs and at drumming-up stations. And give up evil associates: abjure cops and ’tecs and solicitors and magistrates, and all the tribe of leeches and parasites who do naught but impoverish your estate and consume your substance. Be a Timon. Pull up your moral socks. Too often of late has the sooty drum visited your lip. Too long have you looked on gruel when it was skilly. Hie yourself abroad. Go to Spain, as the Dominie advised. Renounce the gay and gaudy life of a tramp on the Toby for the quiet ascetic existence of a wealthy Don Juan. Live plainly in Grand Hotels and in Hotels Imperial. Let your meals be mere eight, or at the most ten, course affairs. Drink

## ARRIVAL AT OVIEDO

only the more nutritive brands of champagne. In short, lead the Simple Life. Travel, I mean, with nothing between you and absolute want but an unlimited supply of money."

Reluctantly I gave in. Against my better judgment I took my own advice and acted on it.

Shutting up Tramp-Regal Lodge, I caught the boat-train to Paris, then by way of Orleans, Poitiers, and Angoulême, fared south through France to Bordeaux, Biarritz, and Irun, at which place I entered Spain. Then from Irun I proceeded by leisurely stages along the magnificent Cantabrian coast, visiting the cities of San Sebastian, Bilbao, and Santander, until I at length arrived at my starting point, the Asturian town of Oviedo.

Actually, I had planned to begin my tramp at Gijon, which lies about five Spanish leagues north of Oviedo on the Bay of Biscay. To walk from sea to sea had been my intention. But the ticket-collector at Oviedo collected my ticket, which was for Gijon *via* Oviedo, and would not return it.

"*Qué no, señor!*" he repeated, between heated bouts of argument. "*Qué no!* The tickets which a ticket-collector collects, he never returns. Are you an Englishman or a Morisco that you did not know this?"

Being a Scotsman I had jaloused it.

I consoled myself, however, with the reflection that, by setting out on a tour of Spain from Oviedo, I would have for a precursor no less famous a personage than he whose name had been continually on my pal the Dominie's lips: the immortal *pícaro*, Gil Blas de Santillane. For it was from this town that he started off on his celebrated travels; with the world before him, and master of a bad mule and forty good ducats.

It being then four o'clock in the afternoon, I

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

booked a room for the night in the Hotel Asturias, and after a wash and brush-up I sallied forth to see the town and to kill time.

Killing time is the one thing that one does most of in Spain. As I have said, it was now four o'clock in the afternoon, yet not until nine o'clock that night would the hotel give me a bite of food. For you must know that in Spanish hotels only two meals a day are provided: *almuerzo*, or breakfast, which is served at lunch-time, and *comida*, or dinner, which is served at supper-time. And between these two meal-times you cannot for love nor money get a thing to eat; inside the hotel, I mean; the *comedor*, or dining-room, being generally locked up. So you have either got to die of hunger or else forage for food outside—generally in cafés or restaurants, of which, fortunately, there is always an abundance.

But the café habit does not come easily to the foreigner who is not a Latin. It has to be cultivated in slow motion, so to speak. Hence, although I had by now been a considerable time in Spain, yet, so far, I had not been able to shake off the feeling of superiority plus amused contempt which contemplation of café-addicts had aroused in me. I was, so far, immeasurably above sitting drinking and eating at a wee round table among a lot of people likewise sitting drinking and eating at wee round tables, who did nothing else but look out at other people who were looking in at the people sitting drinking and eating at the wee round tables. The utter childishness of the thing, so far, had effectively put the bar up. But more of cafés later.

Well, there was I compelled to wander empty-stomached and full-pocketed about the streets and squares of Oviedo for five infernal hours, undergoing for the first time in my life the almost insupportable hardship of having nothing between me

## OVIEDONS IN UNIFORM

and absolute want but an unlimited supply of money.

As a consequence of this, since a hungry man is an angry man, I did not view Oviedo any too appreciatively.

Truth to tell, excepting the Cathedral,<sup>1</sup> the University, some old houses, &c., the town holds little of immediate interest. The Black Death of modernity has ravaged it sore. Nor is it what one would call a typical Spanish city; or, on second thoughts, maybe it is only a too typical Spanish city.

As a matter of fact, I could not see Oviedo for Oviedons—Oviedons in uniform especially. The place teemed with them. Raw young boys clad in cheap-looking khaki, and wearing very dusty boots, swarmed everywhere, smoking and promenading and saluting in a half-hearted, self-conscious manner the officers who were similarly smoking and promenading. Indeed, so little of soldierly smartness or discipline was there about them that at first I supposed them to be Oviedo's Organised Unemployed who had somehow managed to organise themselves into Army suits.

Moreover, amidst this desert of khaki roamed members of the Civil Guard, mostly in twos, conspicuous in their green uniforms, yellow patent

<sup>1</sup> This 14th century Cathedral has since suffered considerable injury and sustained an irreparable loss. During the recent (1934) October Revolution, in which at least 1000 lives were lost in Oviedo alone, and great damage done to public buildings—including the above-mentioned University—the Socialist rebels, in attempting to dynamite the church, *which had been made into a stronghold by the Government troops*, destroyed the adjoining Camara Santa, treasure-house and holy of holies of the Cathedral, which, besides being itself a unique specimen of 9th century art, housed the famous Oviedo *Arca*, a Byzantine chest of the 11th century made of cedar wood overlaid with silver reliefs of Biblical scenes, which contained holy relics of great age and value.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

leathers, and black glazed hats with the funny turn-up at the back. And each had an automatic pistol and a sword at his belt, while quite a few carried a rifle slung behind. And they seemed to be awaiting events.

Then there were other fellows, capable-looking and alert, whose uniform was a dark-blue livery not unlike a chauffeur's. And these, I knew, were the notorious Terrorists of the Republic: the Shock Police, or Guards of Safety and Assault,<sup>1</sup> as they are strangely called. And they, too, sported automatics and swords and rifles, besides rubber batons and life-preservers. And what *they* seemed to be waiting for was for somebody to start something detrimental to public safety, so that they would have an excuse to begin an assault detrimental to everybody's private security.

But nothing happened. The people sitting drinking in the cafés continued to sit and drink, and the people walking about continued to walk about. Nor did the display of so many automatics, life-preservers, rubber batons, swords, and rifles, appear to awe them any. They talked and laughed and smoked and promenaded, apparently a happy people without care or anxiety for past, present, or future.

And now is my chance, while nothing is happening, to introduce you to the familiar sights of a Spanish town.

But first, as to Spanish townfolk. Their clothes, generally speaking, approximate closely to ours. They wear collars and ties and jackets and waistcoats and trousers; and although bare heads, oiled and curled and waved, are the rule, yet a lot of soft hats and a few soft caps are to be seen; while, in the cities of Northern Spain especially, the beret is common. Also, like us, the Spaniard wears boots;

<sup>1</sup> Guardias de Seguridad y Asalto.

## THE SPANISH SEÑORITA

but the soft, hemp-soled, canvas-covered shoe, like a gymn shoe, with the lace tying round the ankle, is the favourite wear of the lower orders.

As to the womenfolk, they dress mostly in black, black being the traditional colour for women. They seem to favour tight-fitting costumes most, too. Then their hair, which is their pride and glory, is always oiled and perfumed and done in attractive styles. And they seldom wear hats. They either go bare-headed or arrange a little black head-veil—the *mantilla*—over their coiffure. It is only on feast days and gala occasions that you come across the bolder señoritas wearing the classic costume: the long lace mantilla draped over the high back-comb, and the silk shawl with the deep fringes. At these times, too, they fasten a rose or a carnation among their tresses.

The Spanish señorita, by the way, is utterly different from the popular conception of her. Instead of being the bold, bad, dagger-flourishing vampire, with which libellous caricature the films have made most of us only too familiar, she is the exact opposite. She is reserved and modest to a remarkable degree. Nay, her demure deportment and shy, retiring nature make her a perfect example of what, for lack of a better phrase, we call an 'old-fashioned girl.'

Although she powders and uses lipstick, and is not averse from having her eyebrows plucked, you would be wrong in labelling her modern. You do not see her careering about in sports-cars or smoking in public. All the time I was in Spain the only women I saw smoking cigarettes were English lady visitors. So if any despairing bachelor wishes to meet real feminine women, and gaze into the deepest, brightest, loveliest eyes in the world, let him go to Spain—with lots of letters of introduction !

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

Which reminds me. I have still to introduce you to the familiar sights of a Spanish town.

Well, the most familiar sights are the shop signs. They catch the stranger's eye and engage his attention more than anything else ; because, although they all begin differently, yet they nearly all end with the same four letters, *ería*. For instance, above the dairy is the sign *Lechería*, or milkery ; above the butcher's *Carnicería*, or meatery ; above the baker's *Panadería*, or breadery ; and so on. The chemist's is a *Droguería*, or druggery ; the jeweller's a *Joyería*, or jewellery ; the fishmonger's a *Pescadería*, or fishery ; the beer-shop a *Cervecería*, or beerery ; the lottery-ticket seller's a *Loterería*, or lotteryry—oh, and many more tongue-twisting combinations.

Then besides these are other familiar signs such as : *Libros*, *Papelería*, *Banco*, *Dentista*, *Farmacia*, *Ultramarinos*, *Comestibles*, *Vestidos*, *Vinos y Licores*, *Comidas y Bebidas*, *Peluquería*, and *Tabacos*. And these last two, along with *Café*, *Bar*, and *Restaurant*, occur oftenest ; for in a Spanish town there appear always to be more hairdressing establishments and tobacconists than anything else. Which fact is significant.

As I roamed hungrily about the crowded streets and squares of Oviedo, the reading and translating of all these various signs helped me to kill the time of which I had such an abundance. I spent tantalisng half-hours, too, loitering outside the windows of certain low, dark dens above the doors of which hung the sign, *Comidas y Bebidas* (Eats and Drinks), watching the diners quaffing gallons of *vino*, white and red, and feasting on weird forms of crustaceans whose empty carcases littered the sanded floor, and whose succulent meat was only to be got at by smashing the shells open with big wooden mallets supplied for that purpose.

## THE COMIDA

Or again, I would peer into the high, cavernous, dimly-lit and sinister interiors of Bodegas, where were great casks of liquor, and huge standing jars, and countless bottles, and pigskins tight with wine stacked to the vaulted ceiling; and it was like peering into Ali Baba's Cave. Or else a Moorish-looking Droguería would draw me with its mysterious cabinets and its flasks and phials and perfumes, and its air of being the ante-chamber to an alchemist's laboratory where skull-capped philosophers still toiled hopefully at the transmutation of gold or the compounding of the Elixir of Life.

At last, after an eternity of waiting, nine o'clock struck, and I made my way back to the hotel. But the dining-room was still locked and bolted. I had actually to wait until half-past nine before they opened the doors, and it was not until a quarter to ten that the waiters began serving dinner.

The meal, though, like all Spanish hotel meals, was worth waiting for. Let me describe it.

But first you must know that in Spanish hotels and restaurants—in nearly all the hotels and restaurants I was in, anyway, and I was in scores—you find set before you a pile of from two to five plates, according to the number of courses, with the soup plate on top and only one knife and fork and spoon at the side. And what you do is eat your way down, so to speak, from the soup to the fruit. It is another old Spanish custom. Nor do the waiters exactly care about supplying you with a clean knife or fork or spoon with each new course. Instead, they expect you to use the same utensils for all the courses. Which is very sensible and economical—and very Spanish.

This dinner, or *comida*, which I am describing, then, consisted of the following courses. First there was *sopa de almejas*, or shellfish soup, which is the



same as kidney soup except that the kidneys are mussels. Then came a *tortilla*, or omelette, made with eggs and chopped meat, to be immediately followed by an *olla podrida*, or stew, of saffron-tinted rice, cubes of beef, bits of garlicky sausage, chick peas, and more shellfish, this time complete with shells. Then arrived what I can only describe as boiled hyacinth bulbs ; after which I had placed before me a dish of *boquerones*, or little fishes like sardines fried in bunches of four and fastened together by the tails in the form of a fan. Then the next course, the sixth, consisted of *chuletas* and *patatas*, or chops and potatoes, with lettuce, which paved the way for the *postres*, or dessert, of wafers and ice-cream, and the *fruta*, oranges, apples, bananas, cherries, grapes, plums, peaches, pears, and almonds and raisins—and, finally, coffee.

As I drained the last drop of coffee, the clock struck a quarter to eleven, and so, gingerly manœuvring my surfeited body out of the chair and making my exit from the dining-room purely by instinct, I climbed dazedly by slow and painful stages to my bedroom, where I had just strength enough left to undress and tumble into bed.

"By gosh, Tramp-Royal," I managed to gasp between groans, "this Simple Life business has its complicated moments. You've bitten off more than you have belly for. It'll need all your reserves of grit and fortitude to see this Timon stunt through. By gosh, Tramp-Royal, by gosh !"

Then coma overcame me, and thereafter I slept the sleep of the damned.

## LAP THE SECOND

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GIL BLAS

The Spanish breakfast—Three silent rowdies—A last look at Oviedo—"A little dog!"—Highroad to the hills—A walking funeral—In Mieres—Unfindable kips—"To the Mayor's!"—Pure Castilian speech—Man without a country.

AT eight next morning, when I went downstairs, everything was dark and dead as the tomb—as is invariably the case in Spanish hotels at eight o'clock in the morning. Only the *sereno*, or night watchman, was up, sitting dozing in his kennel, and as he turned out to be a Basque I had the devil of a job getting him to understand that I wanted breakfast.

Yes, I know I told you that in Spanish hotels only two meals a day, lunch and dinner, are provided. I still tell you so, because the Spanish breakfast is not a meal. Most emphatically I assure you it is not a meal. It is a farce, a deceitful, fraudulent farce, fiendishly devised by Latin brains expressly to insult non-Latin stomachs. For, like its French equivalent, the *petit déjeuner*, the Spanish *desayuno* (so the thing is called) consists of nothing but a cup of coffee and a roll—one cup of coffee and one roll—or, more often, one little glass of coffee and no roll. And you, accustomed to beginning the day in your own country on porridge and kippers and ham and eggs and liver and bacon and kidneys and toast and jam and marmalade and potfuls of tea, are forced, compelled, intimidated into breaking your fast on this Barmecide's feast.

Nor does it end there ; far from it. That is merely the beginning. To have to go through with the farce of eating this foodless meal by yourself is maddening enough, but to be obliged to do so in the company of Spaniards, as nearly always happens—well, that's domino. That fans your smouldering ire into a white-hot light of wrath ; a white-hot light of wrath, moreover, whose white heat is intensified a hundredfold in that you must hide and smother it under the bushel of polite unawareness. Unawareness of what ? Unawareness of the—the—the hellish sucking noises which most Spaniards habitually make when, after having dipped—*dipped* !—their roll into their coffee, they apply the revolting sop to the orifice of their face !

Well, when finally I succeeded in making the night watchman understand my requirements, I entered the dark comedor to find seated in it three silent Spaniards who replied to my "*Buenos dias, señores,*" with grunts. Whereupon I waxed churlish, too, and sat down beside them at a little side-table set with four cups, four teaspoons, four paper napkins, four rolls, four dishes of butter, four little paper packages of loaf sugar, and a crock containing toothpicks. For you must know that toothpicks are as essential to a Spanish meal as bulls are to a bull-fight.

After a while a half-dressed waiter brought in the coffee and milk and filled each of our cups with the half-and-half mixture called *café con leche*. Whereat the three silent Spaniards took up their rolls, dipped them in their coffee—and were no longer silent Spaniards.

Making lightning work of this mockery of a meal, I fled from the noiseful table and demanded of the waiter my *cuenta*, or bill, which, after a tedious wait, he presented, and which (since maybe you

would like to know what hotel charges are in Spain) consisted of the following items : *Comida*, 6 pesetas ; *habitación*, 5 pesetas ; *desayuno*, 1 peseta 50 centimos ; *servicio*, 1 peseta 25 centimos ; total, 13.75 pesetas ; or in plain English : Dinner, 3s. ; room, 2s. 6d. ; breakfast, 9d. ; tips (10% of total), 7½d. ; grand total, 6s. 10½d.

This I paid ; then, shouldering my pack and wishing the waiter "*Adiós!*" I left the hotel and followed the tramlines through the busy streets of the city until I came out upon the great highway that leads south over the Cantabrian Mountains into Leon and Castile.

The morning was ideal. From a brilliantly blue sky, where fair-weather clouds drifted before a breeze, the sun poured its gold upon the budding land, and birds sang, and the air was as clear as a diamond.

As I turned for a last look at Oviedo, which stands on a hill in a valley under a mountain wall, I thought that its roofs, red-tiled, close-clustered, and without visible chimneys, were the same as those which my immortal precursor, the *pícaro*, Gil Blas de Santilane, must have halted to look back upon on that morning when he, too, was first adventuring into the world of Spain.

But he was better equipped than I, was my thought as I faced about and proceeded up the rising road ; for he had a mule under him and forty good ducats in his pouch, whilst I—I was afoot, with nothing between me and absolute want but an unlimited supply of money.

So thinking, I took out a handful of five-peseta pieces, which are silver coins as big and thick as English crown-pieces, and began, like Gil Blas, to count them back and forward in my hat. And exactly as a beggar had accosted him, so a beggar

accosted me : a wee *chico* of about four or five years, clad only in a little shirt that didn't quite cover his sunburnt tummy. He trots out from a wayside hovel and takes hold of my coat.

"Just a little dog,<sup>1</sup> *señor* !" he begs, with the intonation of the born mendicant. "Oh, do give yourself the pleasure of presenting to me a little dog, *señor* ! For God's sake ! A little dog, *señor* ! Just one little dog ! "

"*Anda* !" I cry ; but he only takes firmer hold, muscling himself up on me till his feet swing clear of the ground ; and so I carry him along for about a dozen yards, deafened by his appeals for a little dog. Then I halt.

"Master Short-shirt," I explain, lowering him to the ground ; "me no understand. Me foreigner. A little dog—what is him ? Me no dogs has got. Why you say ? "

"A little dog, *señor* ? You do not understand ? Five centimos are a little dog. Give me one, *señor*, and I will show you."

Withdrawing a fistful of money from my pocket, I pick out a five-centimo piece, or Spanish ha'penny, and present it to the *chico*.

"Look, *señor*," says he, exhibiting that side of the coin bearing the representation of a lion on its hind legs leaning on a shield, which at first glance looks like a puppy dog rolling a ball. "Look, the little dog ! "

"Ah, me understand now," I reply, and, picking out two ten-centimo pieces, or Spanish pennies, on which the lions are much bigger, I give them to him also, saying, "This one is the mother of your little dog, and this one—what you call ?—the father ! Now you have whole *real* to yourself. So—*anda* ! "

<sup>1</sup> *un perro chico*.

## HIGHROAD TO THE HILLS

"Most rapidly, *señor*. Many thanks. Go with God!"

By now I was well clear of Oviedo, following the road through the midst of a pleasant countryside that rose in the south to form a barrier range of wild mountain peaks, a typical cordillera, which I knew to be part of the Cantabrian chain of mountains that stretches for about three hundred miles parallel to the coast and soars in places to heights of 8000 feet and over. And the road was making straight for this savage region.

It was pretty busy, too, the road was, with motors, ox-waggon, mule-carts, herds of sheep and goats, and old women dressed in black and carrying umbrellas riding little donkeys. And in the fields peasant women in sabots laboured behind primitive ploughs or wielded equally primitive hoes; while on the banks of every stream knelt housewives washing household linen. Which made me wonder where, and how, the menfolk were employed—until I came to a wayside *venta*, or tavern, and saw for myself.

Up and up the road took me, against a fair fresh wind, up and up and round and round, rising and falling amid green hills and valleys and shining rivers. Of villages there were few, and these were mere squalid, tumbledown, unpicturesque groups of red-tiled hovels, with rotting balconies, gaping window-holes, and peeling fronts tinted either pink or sky-blue, infested with ox-like women and half-naked children. And you smelt these villages long before you sighted them.

At one place I saw an uncommon sight. This was a meadow where a stream winds through, and where there is an old ivy-covered bridge of several arches. But the fickle stream has deserted its original bed, so that the old bridge stands high and

dry in the midst of the meadow: a useless hulk, with only green corn rippling beneath its arches where water rippled, and only the wind flowing through.

At another place, outside a village, I rested by a well. And to it came old women and young women and girls to draw water, each with her pitcher, as in Biblical days. And when they had drawn water they hoisted the heavy, brimming pitcher on to their heads and walked off with it, perfect studies of grace and balance.

As I continued resting, two priests in long black robes and flat little beaver hats passed, each smoking a cigarette in a fantastic amber holder. Then a gypsy woman came swinging past, striding downhill like a man. She was wrapped in a yellow shawl, and wore earrings; and never in all my days have I seen a wilder face, nor encountered a wilder glance from wilder eyes. Nor have I seen a face so perfectly oval, nor brows so calmly level, nor a skin so clear that the scarlet of the cheeks shone through the olive tan like a flame.

Then out from the village came a slowly moving procession of silent, bare-headed men following in the wake of a bier and coffin, led by a priest. And at each of the four corners of the bier walked a man carrying a lighted candle. It recalled to mind the funeral of Gil Blas's father at Oviedo, the ostentation of which, you may remember, so incensed the inhabitants that the prodigal Gil and the too-efficient Scipio had to flee the city. And now and again, at a signal from this priest, the bearers would set down their load and the mourners would halt and bow their heads, listening while the priest read Latin from a book. And as they passed I stood up and took off my hat, and they all looked at me. But the priest, he did not look at me. He slunk

furtively past, avoiding my eye like one detected in wrongdoing.

Thereafter I climbed with the road as it mounted by loops and zigzags up the face of a hill on to a windy ridge, whence I descended into a long straggling valley past wretched hovels, to arrive eventually at the coal and iron town of Mieres.

As it was now nearly two o'clock in the afternoon, and as, in consequence of having breakfasted *á la Española*, my legs were beginning to give way under me, I made a bee-line for a shop with a Comidas y Bebidas sign above it, praying that I would not be too late to be served with dinner.

Luckily I was in time. The waitress, after showing me where to wash my hands, conducted me into a little room at the back where two or three diners still lingered over their wine. And here I sat down before a pile of five plates and thankfully shook out the napkin.

The meal being a *precio fijo*, or fixed price, affair, I didn't have to order it. Hardly was I seated than there appeared on the table a tureen of *sopa de pan*, or bread soup, from which I helped myself. Then followed in rapid succession *huevos fritos*, or fried eggs; *pescado guisado*, or stewed fish; *guisantes*, or peas; *bifstek*, or beefsteak, with *patatas fritas*, or fried potatoes; and for dessert, a little pot of custard, followed by a dish of oranges and a cup of coffee. And all I paid for this, including the usual bread and the usual bottle of wine, was only 4.50 pesetas—2s. 3d.!

When slinging on my pack afterwards, the shoulder-strap came away, which was a misfortune. But along the street a bit, on the edge of the pavement, who should be sitting busy plying his awl but a cobbler! So I instigated him by signs to sew the strap on again, rewarding him with thruppence to his immense satisfaction.



## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

From Mieres I held on up the long winding valley by the river road towards the still distant head, where the barrier peaks of the cordillera bulked fearsome in their mist and snow. And squalid hovel after squalid hovel lined the route. Motors, ox-waggon, mule-carts, herds of sheep and goats, and old women on donkeyback still crowded the way. In the tiny valley fields peasant women toiled at plough and hoe. I met a lot of miners, too, in loose smocks, baggy trousers, and broad berets, coming off their shift, and each carried an umbrella ! Also I encountered more priests and another walking funeral.

At length the sun sank behind the hills, and I found myself entering the little town of Pola de Lena, eyed by all the loungers in the Plaza, or square.

"Is there a *venta* here, *señor* ?" I ask of a Guardia Civil, saluting him as he sits with others smoking outside their barracks.

"A *venta* ?" he echoes, not attempting to rise. "Yes, further down the street opposite the tobacconist's."

But on my applying at this place for board and lodging for the night, the man in charge violently repulses me. He wants no truck with foreigners—*no, señor !* So I return to the Guardia.

"Ah," says he, on my relating what happened, "it is not a *venta* you want. It is a *fonda*. Try the one up the street."

Off I go, thereupon, the cynosure of all eyes, to try the *fonda* up the street. But the old lady who comes to the door raises her hands in horror at the idea of my even thinking that she could put me up for the night. So I have again to return to the Guardia, reporting failure.

"Ah," says he, on my stating my requirements

“TO THE MAYOR’S!”

more fully, “I understand you now. It is neither a *venta* nor a *fonda* that you want. It is a *posada*. There’s one at the foot of the street.”

Off I go for the third time, with the entire town looking on, to try the *posada* at the foot of the street. But the *posadero*, beholding me while I am yet afar off, slyly retreats into the *posada* and shuts and locks the door after him. Nor, when I arrive, does he answer to my repeated knockings. And the entire town titters at my discomfiture.

I fume. This beats anything I ever experienced formerly. Rarely in the old Toby days, when I tramped about happy, with nothing between me and an unlimited supply of money but absolute want, did I encounter such rebuffs. And I fume some more. But a fat lot of good that does. Since I have made my bed I must lie in it. My easy old moneyless life is a thing of the past, and its place taken by this hard new moneyful existence. Not for me now the quickly found ruffer and the drum-up under the stars, but instead, the unfindable kips and the foreign faces, the tongueless vigil and all the pain.

“The cursed *posadero* shut his blasted door, *señor*,” says I, returning to the Guardia.

The entire town holds its garlicky breath.

“Ah,” says the Guardia, rising slowly from his chair, and adjusting his pistol and sword. “In that case you must come along with me.”

“Where to?”

“To the Mayor’s.”

“To the—*Mayor’s*?”

“To the Mayor’s,” repeats the Guardia.

“To the Mayor’s!” echoes the entire town.

To the Mayor’s it is. Leading the way up the street, the Guardia enters a house where, while I wait below, he mounts to the first floor and knocks at a door.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

A tall, spare Spaniard of the hidalgo type makes his appearance. He is the Mayor, or *Alcalde*. For fully ten minutes he and the Guardia talk and shrug and gesticulate, but the only words I catch are "*Alemán*" and "*vagabundo*"; and I catch them because they are repeated again and again, and are directed at me. Then the Mayor goes in, the Guardia comes down, and I follow him back to his chair outside the barracks.

"The Mayor," he explains, sitting down and beginning to roll a cigarette, while the entire town gathers round at a distance, "says that you cannot stay here. You must go on. The last German tramp whom we——"

"Tramp?" I cried out, stung to the quick. "Tramp? Tra——" But I choked on the word. Anger shook me. Choler rattled me. My unlimited supply of money turned over in its coffer. This was the last straw. This was too much. This—this——

"*Señor*," said I, in controlled, vibrant tones, fluently and idiomatically manipulating the pure Castilian speech, than which none is more grave, dignified, or stately: "*Señor*, you no' unnerstan'. Me no bum. Me no—what you call?—itinerant low bloke. Not! not! Me touring gentleman. Me travel, employing the foot not out of necessary but from choose. Me, besides, has money, plenty money, supplies of the money without ends. Further along, *señor*, me no German. Me Scottish!"

You could have heard a pin drop. The fluency and purity of my Castilian must have been a revelation. These Spaniards, they think nobody can speak Spanish but themselves. And the Guardia, he let fall his half-made cigarette and sprang to his feet.

"Pardon, *señor*! Pardon! I misunderstood. But I naturally supposed, since you are travelling

## MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

on foot, that you were a German, and therefore unable to pay. Spain is overrun with Germans, *señor*, who travel the roads without money, yet who, nevertheless, expect us to feed and lodge them. Pardon! But, *señor*, you will allow me—you will let me—you—you—you will permit me, as a mere matter of form, to—to see this money which you say you possess, *señor*—yes? ”

Breathing deeply, but saying not a word, I took out a fistful of big silver pieces and offered them to the Guardia, who picked one out, weighed it in his hand, looked at it, tossed it up, examined it, weighed it in his hand again, bit it twice, inspected it, then, suddenly squatting on his hams, he rang the coin good and hard on the pavement. After which he rose, smiling and content.

The entire town relaxed. It smiled and was content, too.

“ Your money is perfectly good, *señor*, ” said the Guardia, returning the coin. “ It will be easy now to find you lodgings. But—you said you were Scottish. What is Scottish? ”

“ It mean I am native of Scotland. ” <sup>1</sup>

“ Scotland, *señor*? What town is that? ”

“ It not a town. It—what you call?—suburb, of London, England. English we speak there. ”

“ Ah! Then you must be an Englishman! ”

“ I—I must be an Englishman. ”

<sup>1</sup> *Escocia* in Spanish.

## LAP THE THIRD

### OVER THE CANTABRIANS

"*Buen viaje!*"—The pace of the ox—Hunger—In Pajares del Puerto—The summit—A gloomy defile—Into Villamanin—A typical *ventero*—The ten children—Marred merriment—Women into oxen—Juvenile sports and pastimes.

WHAT followed after I admitted to the Guardia that I must be an Englishman, I only dimly recollect. My mind, you can imagine, was in no state to receive or retain impressions. All I remember is that the Guardia took me to a house where I was made welcome, and where I sat down with other lodgers to a three-course supper, and slept in a spotless bedroom, and breakfasted next morning on a cup of coffee and a roll, and paid the bill, which came to two shillings, and that after my wishing the duenna of the house "*Adiós!*" and her wishing me "*Buen viaje!*" I departed from Pola de Lena and took the highroad for the sierra.

It was warm. Lizards, coloured brown and yellow and green, kept darting across the road. The grass hummed with insect life. At intervals an elusive perfume filled the air. The wooded hills on either hand were musical with rapturous warblings. In the fields the women sang at their work. Ox-waggon creaked, mule-teams jingled, donkeys coughed in the dust. Beneath me the smooth road flowed past almost unfelt, kilometre-stone succeeding kilometre-stone with pleasing frequency.

But these ox-waggon. The oxen, you know, are

## THE PACE OF THE OX

yoked together under a heavy wooden beam lashed to their heads and horns with straps and ropes, and to see them approach is the solemnest sight. The unhurried deliberateness of their progression is a thing to wonder at. If they moved the least bit slower they would be motionless. Nothing more funereal, too, can be imagined than their measured pace. Soundlessly, effortlessly, without complaint or resentment, patient beneath the yoke of ages, like something wise and true out of the Old Testament, the shackled beasts move forward, swaying in unison, lifting up and setting down their hoofs in the dust like tired and melancholy automatons. They are a walking sermon. You feel they represent something incredibly old, yet ageless; something that began before the Beginning and shall cease only after the End. Their advance, you feel, is a thing beyond human power to check; nothing on earth, in heaven, or in hell, you fancy, could halt that dread progress. It is like the oncoming of some Force: so slow because so sure; relentless, irresistible, inevitable, like the advance of Time, the approach of Doom, the advent of Judgment Day.

Meanwhile the valley I was following continued to wind, the road continued to soar, and with every kilometre the barrier peaks of the cordillera loomed loftier ahead. It seemed impossible that there could be gangway over such sky-climbing alps.

Through the hill-village of Campomanes I passed, up and up into the blue. The air grew rarer and clearer, and the sun beat on me with fierce, oven-like heat. On every hillside cattle-bells tinkled. From the verdant valley-bottoms, where butterflies abounded and bright flowers grew in profusion, there would rise in the stillness the sound of children at play, and on looking away below I would make out the tiny, toy-like, clustering roofs of a village that

nobody has ever heard of. And I would wonder what kind of grub the folks were chesting in at down there.

For hunger had got me again. It was feasting like a vulture at my vitals. My stomach was a howling void, my knees were giving way. And small wonder. A cup of coffee and a solitary roll is not the sort of breakfast that mountains should be climbed on. Yet here was I climbing mountains on that sort of breakfast. And because of the unlimited supply of money lining my pockets I was hungrier now than I had ever been in my life before. And I've been hungry. I've robbed sparrows of their crumbs—literally. I know how crusts taste that have been lying in ditch-bottoms for weeks with beetles and worms and snails crawling over them. Yet this new hunger was a hundred times more unbearable than the old. For though to be hungry and penniless is bad, yet to be hungry and possess the price of countless *table d'hôte* dinners, as was my pitiable case, is much worse.

Tantalus had nothing on me.

Before me, as I climbed towards the chine of the sierra, floated visions of the many posh feeds I could have bought—had there been any place where I could have bought them. Once I seriously considered whether, supposing I swallowed a 100-peseta note, the result would be the same as swallowing the 25 seven-course dinners the note was good for. The fable of the man with the bag of diamonds dying of thirst in the desert occurred to me. I was that man's twin—blast him. And I would halt and give tongue to anathemas and malisons. Likewise I would fulminate and rap out oaths. But mostly I just cursed. And the quality of my cursing was such that the curses of the bloke who cursed the Jackdaw of Rheims paled into benedictions in comparison.

## IN PAJARES DEL PUERTO

Then suddenly and unexpectedly, a village, Pajares del Puerto, hove up ahead. Yet, it being a mere huddle of ramshackle cabins through which ran the road, I did not dare to hope that it would be capable of supplying me with the kind of dinner that I, as a Simple Lifer, could permit myself to eat. However, seeing the usual Guardia sitting smoking on the usual chair outside the usual barracks, I approached and requested him, as a sort of bad joke on myself, to direct me to the nearest restaurant. And judge of my astonishment when, without batting an eye, he directed me to the nearest restaurant!

My astonishment didn't end there, either. That in such a poverty-stricken hamlet there should be a restaurant was astonishing enough, but that in that same restaurant I should be received and waited on, and served with a perfectly cooked dinner of several courses, exactly as in a city restaurant—well, that was dumbfounding.

For on my entering the place, which was a combined fonda and venta (which terms I'll explain later), a bare-legged peasant girl, after waiting on me while I washed and brushed up, showed me into a bright little comedor where the tables were covered with snow-white cloths and bore snow-white napkins and sparkling glasses and water-bottles and cruets and crocks full of sharpened toothpicks, and everything. And there she plied me with bread and wine and macaroni soup and stew and fried eggs and fish and ham-and-sausage stuff, and a potful of cream custard, and oranges and apples and two cups of coffee. And the charge was only four pesetas—two shillings!

"By heaven," thought I, on leaving the fonda, "there's nothing I'd like better than to drag a few Highland freebooters—I mean Deeside hotel-keepers



—up here by the heels and show them this place ! ”

At the first kilometre-stone beyond the village I paused, looking back down the valley. It was truly alpine. On the green hillside, red-roofed Pajares nestled and clung, its tiny fields terracing the steep slopes beneath it till lost in the haze of profundity. And from the depths rose the ceaseless tinkle of cattle-bells. And here and there, threading hidden paths, panniered donkeys toiled up and down. And women could be seen tripping to and fro, graceful with pitchers. And opposite the village, across the smiling valley, lay a desolate world of black, snow-capped, infinitely repellent mountain peaks, remote and aloof, whose crests glanced and glittered like sword blades in the sun. It was a picture I was to recall again and again when the empty horizons of the great plains encompassed me.

Upward I laboured in the baking heat, ever upward.

The road, a masterpiece of engineering, climbed and coiled like a heaven-aspiring dragon. At one place I had to halt for very amazement at seeing, far overheard, riding, as it seemed, the hill-crests—the railway ! Then I came upon a snowplough lying by the roadside ; and later, on the last lap, I passed huge stone pillars with conical tops which, bordering the route, mark the pass in winter snows.

At last I attained the summit—La Perruca it is called—where, at an altitude of 4468 feet, the province of Asturias ends and that of Leon begins. And there is an hotel here—the Hotel Valgrande—and nothing else.

I was terribly disappointed. In disgust I looked around. Instead of the wide, colourful prospect I had expected to be rewarded with, nothing but dreary wastes of heather and rocky hills met my

## A GLOOMY DEFILE

gaze. And the sun went in, and the day grew chill and grey. So, with infinite regret at having to part so soon from the bright Asturian valleys, I struck down the long straight road into the forlorn land of Leon.

Down along the road I went, chilled and depressed by the sudden and unexpected change both in scenery and weather.

Where but a moment ago flowering valleys and mountains wooded to the peak had gladdened the eye, dark glens of heath and barren crags now grieved the sight. And summer had given place to winter. Instead of sunshine and butterflies and luxuriant foliage, cold skies and snowflakes and naked boughs now prevailed.

In turn I passed through two wretched hamlets, the poverty-stricken inhabitants eyeing me with suspicion and contempt. Then the countryside narrowed to a gloomy defile walled in by colossal crags topped with ice and snow, where there was just room enough for the road, the river, and the railway. And through the length of this place wooden sheds sheltered the line from snow-slides and avalanches.

It somehow reminded me of Glen Croe in far-off Scotland, and in fancy I followed the oft-trod track round the head of Loch Long *via* Arrochar to Tarbet on Loch Lomondside, and thence by Luss and Balloch to Dumbarton, Bowling, Clydebank. But, believe it or not, even as I, in fancy, was passing Singer's Clock, lo and behold! in actual fact, there passed me in the dark defile a great lumbering motor-lorry, which had painted on its sides the familiar red S, wherein appeared the unfamiliar words: "*Máquinas Para Coser*," meaning machines for to sew, which is the cumbrous Spanish way of saying sewing machines—Singer Sewing Machines!

I didn't feel so lonely after that.

Then, when I had completed the traverse of this grim gulf and was sitting resting where it debouches into open country, there came galloping through the dusk a soldier on horseback, armed to the teeth, his greatcoat and accoutrements flying in the wind, and the hoofs of his mount striking fire from the road, plying quirt and spur, riding hell-for-leather as though the destiny of Spain depended on his speed. And as he thundered past into the dark defile he flung back at me a wild "*Adiós!*" to which I replied with an equally wild "*Adiós, soldado!*"<sup>1</sup>

Then twilight darkened into night, and I was alone in that savage region with nothing between me and absolute want but an unlimited supply of money.

Onward for some kilometres more I continued over the smooth, gleaming surface of the concrete road, philosophising on the utter helplessness of benighted travellers whose only possession is what they have in their purses, when the lights of the little township of Villamanin showed up ahead, and presently I was stopping people in the almost deserted main street to pester them with enquiries as to where one could find harbourage for the night.

"*Usted perdone, señor,*" said I to a bloke in a beret, the fourth I had stopped. "*Hay fonda o posada o hotel aquí?*"

He shook his head and was for passing on. But, recalling my experience of yesternight, I hastily added, "*Tengo dinero. Tengo mucho dinero!*"

Ah, that was different! My having money, much money, altered the case entirely—*si, señor!* Al-

<sup>1</sup> *Adiós*, used by Spaniards in bidding goodbye, is used by them also in saying hello; which must account, I suppose, for English men-tourists, in Cadiz, for example, being *greeted* by would-be guides with a smiling "Goodbye, mister!"

## A TYPICAL VENTERO

though there was no fonda or posada or hotel that he knew of, he replied, yet if I would be good enough to accompany him he would make enquiry at a certain bar.

Down a dark back street I accordingly followed him, trusting that it was no kidnapper's den he was taking me to, and we soon arrived at the bar in question, where, after shouldering our way through a gang of unshaven, ruffianly-looking, harmless fellows in berets who were lounging about drinking and smoking and gambling, my guide buttonholed the bartender, acquainting him with my predicament and with the fact that I had money, much money.

This individual, who was also the proprietor of the venta, looked me up and down. Stout, dirty, lazy, his face all smiles and his eyes all cunning, he was a typical *ventero*.

"Show us your money," he commanded.

I exhibited a single five-peseta piece.

"Is that all?" he cried. "Have you no more?"

"Yes, one more." Pretending to have difficulty in finding it, I produced another five-peseta piece, which, added to the other, made a sum of five shillings in English money.

The *ventero* was suitably impressed. A foot-traveller with ten pesetas was certainly a wealthy foot-traveller. Still, taking the two silver pieces, he rang them on a square slab of stone which he kept on the counter for that purpose. The result was satisfactory.

"*Bueno!*" said he, returning the money. "I can accommodate you, *señor*. Have the goodness to sit down."

I sat down. And for a whole hour and a half I remained seated, nobody paying me the slightest attention. At the end of that period, though, my

patience exhausted, I up and demanded of the ventero at what time supper would be ready.

"Patience, *hombre*," he advised. "Have patience. Supper will be ready at supper-time."

So, fuming and famishing, I had to wait for supper-time to arrive, which it did half an hour later. Whereupon, following mine host upstairs to an immaculate bedroom, I washed, and was shown into the family dining-room.

This was a large chamber with whitewashed walls and ceiling, an uncarpeted floor scrubbed white, a row of string-bottomed chairs standing along one wall, two Singer sewing machines in a corner, and in the middle a deal table covered with a cloth of coarse packsheet. Here I sat down, with a son of the house for company, and the mother served us first with chunks of peasant bread and a bottle of red wine, then with an unsavoury mess of some sloppy, garlicky stuff, a portion of fried fish—bonito—and *queso*, or cheese, which was white and flabby like cold pudding and oozed water when cut. And a dish of oranges completed the frugal meal.

When not serving us, the mother, a slatternly peasant woman, sat on one of the string-bottomed chairs and gossiped in sign language. My being a foreigner made her suppose me to be partly deaf and wholly daft. And, while she continued grimacing and gesturing in a most laughable manner, her children trooped silently in and occupied the rest of the chairs. Including my table partner they were, not seven, but ten! And the mother exhibited them with pride, naming them from the eldest down: Alejandro, Gil and Juan (twins), Ramon, Tomas, Maria and Emelia (twins), Eduardo (a twin, t'other had died), and little Angel and wee Jesus.

Believe me, though many and varied were the adventures and persecutions that Borrow en-

countered and underwent while endeavouring to popularise the Bible in Spain, in number and variety they couldn't hold a candle to those which would assuredly befall anyone rash enough to tour the Peninsula endeavouring to popularise the more controversial works of—Marie Stopes !

Noticing that my table partner, Ramon, drank no wine, I asked how this was. His mother answered for him. She got on her feet and pretended to be drunk, thereby demonstrating that wine went to Ramon's head. On which, to show that I understood, I got on my feet, too, and pretended to be drunk. And everybody laughed. And Alejandro, he got on his feet and began staggering about. And Gil and Juan and Ramon and Tomas and Maria and Emelia and Eduardo, yea, and little Angel and wee Jesus, they all got on their feet and started reeling about the room, knocking against one another in feigned drunkenness, laughing uproariously and having a great time.

Suddenly, however, when the merriment was at its height, the door burst open, and into our midst stumbled the father, staggering and reeling even as we were. But instead of laughing the more we stopped laughing altogether. For *his* drunkenness wasn't feigned. . . .

Next morning, after breakfasting on a bowl of coffee and a hunk of bread, I uncomplainingly paid the ventero the exorbitant sum of five pesetas which he demanded, and resumed my journey.

It was a grey morning. Heavy rain had fallen in the night, and the road was just drying. Soon after leaving Villamanin the countryside narrowed again to run between rocky crags, and thereafter for many kilometres it kept opening out and closing in, the bordering heights growing lower and lower and the

landscape generally becoming less savage and more pastoral.

In the strips of fields by the wayside the usual peasant women toiled. Their sabots, I noticed, had little pegs, or feet, underneath, raising them clear of the ground, so that, when the wearers walked, their gait was as ungainly and splay-footed as that of their oxen. Indeed, between the oxen and these women there existed very little real difference. Both were mere beasts of burden. Why, it was no uncommon sight to see, in place of oxen, a couple of these females harnessed to a plough.

Once more the road became peopled, mostly with old women on donkeyback and flocks of sheep and goats; and about noon I came to a large village called Pola de Gordon, which was thronged with folk marketing. Here the sun shone out, and everybody seemed instantly to become possessed of an umbrella under which they retreated as though in fear of the Evil Eye. And here I dined in a fonda, paying one-and-ninepence for a most unsatisfying meal consisting of an omelette, some fried meat, two oranges, bread, and a bottle of vile wine. But being an hour in advance of the customary dinner hour, I dared not grumble. The *muchacha* who served me, she did all the grumbling.

On leaving the village I passed where children were playing. The girls, I saw, favoured the familiar game of peever, or hop-scotch, while the boys were divided between football, cat-and-bat, skittles, and the Spanish game of pelota, in which a ball is kept bouncing incessantly against a wall. Then one little cherub had tied one end of a long thread round the body of a large winged insect, and, holding the other end, was now watching with delight while the tethered insect flew round and round him like a wee captive aeroplane. This, I was to find, is a favourite

## JUVENILE SPORTS AND PASTIMES

sport with Spanish kiddies; juvenile preparation, so to speak, for adult appreciation of the bull-ring!

Also I noted three little maids who, kneeling beside a dirty puddle, were washing out their dolls' clothes in exact and comical imitation of their mothers, who were washing linen on the banks of a nearby stream.

For kilometre after kilometre I trudged onward in the heat over the magnificently surfaced road, to enter ultimately the final valley of the foothills, and pass thence through the village of La Robla out on to the great plain of Leon beyond.



## LAP THE FOURTH

### ACROSS THE PLAIN OF LEON

Sight of the plain—Lifeless solitudes—A pillar of rain—Evensong of the cicadas—The Writing on the Wall—Tempted of demons—Seeing red—The lights of Leon—" *Pago ! Pago ! Pago !* "—The irony of it!—Spanish contrasts—Mansilla—*Fonda* defined—Island pueblos—Melody of an old song—In Matalana—Lullaby.

THIS plain of Leon is stupendous, colossal, of a vastitude that staggers and intoxicates conception.

The sight of it, as I issued from the foothills, hurled itself at me, smote me, felled me, annihilated me. I felt as though an entire ocean, heaped together to form a single, gigantic, world-swilling wave, had precipitated itself at me and engulfed me.

That human vision could compass such boundless immensity was in itself miraculous. For the plain, bare and unbroken, infinite, illimitable, immeasurably spacious, now flat, now undulating, chequered by sun and cloud, its heath and grass lightening and darkening as the winds of its mighty sky played over them—this plain, unrolling between the horizons like a vast scroll, stretched away and away for ever and ever, it seemed, into the hazy remoteness of uttermost distance. And so wide a portion of the earth's surface did it overlie that it demonstrated and made patent the roundness of the world ; for it was convex, curved with the great slow curvature of the terrestrial globe.

And into the midst of this vast openness, making straight for the southern horizon, without bend or

break or turn in any part of its length, visible for leagues, the road led down.

It was an arterial road, raw and new, whose superb surface made walking a joy. But, like most of Spain's superbly surfaced new roads, it gave one the impression of being something of a white elephant; the traffic for which it had been built being non-existent; on an average, one motor-car passed every three-quarters of an hour—speeding terrifically. Hence I had the great plain entirely to myself. And as I descended into its horizon-bounded spaciousness I felt as insignificant as an ant in the middle of the Sahara.

For kilometre after kilometre I strode tirelessly on, the only observable change in the landscape being the slight contraction of its encompassing bounds resulting from my continuous descent.

The great plain seemed utterly devoid of life. Not the veriest hint of habitation presented itself, even at remote distance. Hardly a sound stirred the solitudes. At long intervals the strange lone cry of the hoopoe bird—*Hoo-poo-poooh! Hoo-poo-poooh!*—would break the stillness, only to accentuate it and leave it profounder than before. Save for the saplings bordering the road, too, not a tree was to be seen. Wastes of purple heath, alternating with prairies of flower-dotted yellow grass, undulated away in every direction to the far-off skyline.

Behind me, in the north, the colossal barrier range of the Cantabrians heaved its dark-blue, snow-topped wall, stretching without a break eastward and westward: eastward to where the heaven-supporting Picos de Europa marked the meeting of four provinces, and westward into the bleak mountain fastnesses of Galicia. And before me, in the south, in the midst of the great plain, the city of Leon lay somewhere over the horizon's rim.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

Onward and downward I swung at a great rate, the sun, now declining towards the west, acting as a spur. Once a lofty pillar-like mass of swirling rain, joining earth to heaven, came tearing out of Galicia across the boundless steppes with the fury and velocity of a tornado, drenching everything in its way. It made me think of the pillar of cloud which hid the Children of Israel by day from the pursuing Egyptians. Yet, though travelling fast, it took an unconscionable time in crossing my path, what of the immensity of the plain. And so compact was its mass that, when I reached where it had swept hissing over the road, leaving in its wake a dripping swath three or four hundred yards in width, I could stand with one foot on the wet and one on the dry as though standing astride a dividing line. And as I continued into the south I fancied that somewhere in a drizzly British city children must have sung :

“ Rain, rain, go to Spain,  
And never come back again ! ”

Signs of cultivation, though not of habitation, now became apparent. Extensive fields chequered the plain. But neither fence nor hedge nor wall girded these round. And all over Spain it is the same ; one can walk for hundreds of leagues and come upon not a single fence or hedge or wall. The owners, whoever they are, are content to own the land ; they do not ram that ownership down other people's throats. And the result ? The result is that trespass notices are conspicuous by their absence ; and trespassers—well, there ain't no sich persons. For trust begets trust, and in the absence of fences and hedges and walls there is no inducement to trespass.

Sunset found me lying resting beside a league-

## EVENSONG OF THE CICADAS

stone, far gone in fatigue, with the city of Leon still hidden under the horizon.

Though I had been padding the hoof haltlessly since mid-day, I had made no appreciable progress across the plain. The Cantabrians still loomed immediately behind me as though I had but recently issued from them. It seemed impossible that I could ever draw away from them, or that they would ever cease from appearing to follow. I felt they were after me, like bloodhounds after a felon.

No sooner had day slipped its copper into the meter of the west, and night with its stars glowed incandescent through the mantle of the east, than the plain which had hitherto been so voiceless waxed suddenly and deafeningly vocal.

'Twas the evensong of the cicadas.

I resumed the road to its ear-splitting accompaniment. The myriad whirring, chirping, twittering noises which composed it filled the night solid with sound, made the air vibrate and palpitate with thrilling, piercing sibilation. All of the grasshopper kind were astir and singing, singing, singing, incessantly singing. Sharp, shrill, pitched high, of astounding volume, with something mechanical about it, like the whine of a high-powered bandsaw, yet tuneful withal, this chant of the tribes of the grass beat and throbbed without cease, now louder, now softer, but always regular, sustained, with unchanging rhythm, like a pulse of pure sound, sending surging through the starry dark waves and billows of insect song.

I attacked the kilometres with renewed vigour, the dread of being benighted quickening my pace to a half-run.

Once more the panic-fear attendant upon having nothing between me and absolute want but an unlimited supply of money held me in its grip. I

groaned aloud with hunger and hopelessness. The feeble strength engendered by my meagre breakfast and hardly less meagre dinner had long since drained away, leaving me weak and faint. Hence I was now walking on my nerves, as it were, propelled onward not by leg-power but by will-power.

On and on I sped through the starry dark. Sweat lashed from me. The ceaseless singing, singing, singing of the cicadas tortured my brain. The sight of the merciless kilometre-stones, with their tale of hundreds of kilometres to Madrid, maddened me. What about Leon? Where the devil was Leon? Why were they dumb about Leon? *Was there a Leon?* Curse, and double-curse, Leon!

Then of a sudden there gleamed ahead on the left the whitewashed gable of a roadmenders' cottage. And on that whitewashed gable were printed, as are always printed on the whitewashed gables of the roadmenders' cottages that line Spanish highways a league's distance apart, large words and figures denoting local mileage. And running up to the cottage and straining my eyes nearly out of their sockets, I read those words and figures. And I might have been Daniel reading the Writing on the Wall. For those words and figures, what of my exhausted condition, spelled Doom. They were: "*A León = 10 kilómetros.*"

Ten kilometres to Leon!

I nearly collapsed. What price my unlimited supply of money now, eh? What good was it? Could it shorten by even the thousandth fraction of a millimetre this gosh-awful distance to Leon? Could it infuse into me new strength? Could it fit me with a fresh pair of legs? Could it—— No! no! no! It could do absolutely nothing. It was as useless as a broken crutch. I must lean on myself. I must trust to my own pins—to my own sorely

aching, terribly tired, almost paralysed pins—to bring me to Leon. I must keep on and on and on, though the effort killed me.

Fuming at fate, I set off. The road, the remorseless road, bordered now on either side by tall poplars planted equidistant apart, ran unwaveringly ahead without bend or break or turn, maddening in its monotony. The singing of the cicadas, too, added to the agony. It was more ear-splittingly sibilant than before. It tormented the mind. Its effect on the nerves was as devastating as that devilish form of Chinese torture wherein a high-pitched note is played endlessly on a fiddle close to the victim's ear. Nevertheless, I forged ahead. I made haste rapidly. I sped over the road at a killing pace, hell-bent for Leon.

One, two, three kilometre-stones I packed in swift succession behind me, and was nearing the fourth when the red-glowing eye of a camp-fire winked at me from the dark heath, and eager voices hailed me.

I stopped dead in my tracks. The hot sweat reeking upon me turned icy cold. I knew funk. For here in my hour of weakness were demons come to tempt me: demons not with hoofs and horns and tails and tridents, but demons with a drum, demons with a billy, demons with tommy and peter and groundsheets and woodsmoke and starlight and a wind on the heath, brother, and slip a fella the makings of a fag, chum.

In a hoarse, unnatural voice I returned the hails and approached the camp-fire. Round it sat two young wanderlusters whom, by their golden hair and fair complexions, I judged to be Germans, and whom, by their happy laughs and carefree faces, I judged to be bums without a kopek in their jeans.

"*Willkommen, señor,*" said the nearer of the two, speaking a kind of lingua franca. "Welcome,

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

*monsieur.* Won't you *setzen aquí* near *le feu und essen*, eat, *manger, comer, mit uns?* *Verstehen Sie nicht?* *Sprechen Sie nicht Deutsch?* *Habla usted español o francés, señor?* Are you English? *Woher kommen Sie?* *Bist du auf der Walze?* *Parlez-vous français?* *Spreekt U Hollandsch?* Won't you join us? We are frying sausages, mister. Would you like some?"

That last crack was more than my tortured soul could endure. While the speaker had been talking, the heavenly aroma of these same sausages, which the squareheads must have bummed in Leon, had been playing around my nostrils, raising in me a blind, unreasoning anger; and the thought that I, who possessed money in unlimited supplies, should be benighted, starving, dropping apart with fatigue, while these two penniless panhandlers should have soft beds, a warm fire, and a succulent supper—that thought now made me see red. So that I felt that if I didn't turn berserk and run amok, I would burst into spontaneous combustion.

"Teutonic instruments of Hell!" I cried in a fine frenzy, jumping mad. "Imps! Demons! Devils incarnate! Sure, I'll join you! Sure, I'd like some! Sure! Ask me! Taunt me! Flaunt your beggary in my face! Throw my wealth in my teeth! Show me up! Tell me my money's no good! Go on, tell me! Tell me! Tell me, you tramps! Tell me, you ragamuffins! Tell me, you—you—you unmoneyed bums, you! *Tell me!* By the living Lucifer t—— Boys," I said, "if you'll excuse me, I'll be toddling along now. Sorry I can't stop. It's pretty late, and I want to reach Leon before places close. Good-night—and thanks, boys."

Trembling in every limb I fled away. At a murderous pace I flew along through the starry dark past the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth kilometre-

## THE LIGHTS OF LEON

stones, running the gauntlet of the never-ceasing lines of poplars, hounded always by the devilish singing, singing, singing of the cicadas, speeding like a thing of the night along that remorseless arterial road, which had neither bend nor break nor turn in any part of its length. And fatigue fell completely away from me. My body seemed to melt and evaporate and leave behind only the mind : the wild, distracted, tortured mind that hoped desperately for Leon, that strained and yearned onward dementedly for Leon.

Then after a passage of ages a light suddenly blinked into view at the distant end of the dark avenue of the road. Then another followed, and another, and another. Then the plain fell away in front to reveal a great nebulous cluster of pin-points of light, far-twinkling like stars. . . . The lights of Leon. . . . And after a further passage of ages, wherein those lights mocked and tantalised me mercilessly, winking, winking, winking, remote and afar off, appearing to recede as rapidly as I advanced, I at long, long last came to where pavements began.

Now Leon, on its north side, has no suburbs, but starts abruptly. Also, where it starts abruptly there is a little wooden shack by the roadside with an official wearing a red-banded peaked cap sitting in it. He is the *consumo* man, the excise officer, the toll-ghoul, and whatever else you like to call him, whose duty it is to examine all luggage entering or leaving the city. At the exits and entrances of most Spanish cities you always find him stationed. But at that time I didn't know this.

Well, as I went tearing through the portals into Leon like a tornado of the night, an angry voice called out for me to halt, and an enraged man in a red-banded peaked cap came sprinting after me, excitedly waving a lantern.



With a great effort I braked myself to a standstill, reeling drunkenly and fuming at the delay.

"What the blazes do you want?" I cried, in English; too beside myself to think up Spanish stuff.

But the consumo, too beside himself likewise to talk coherently, could only flourish his lantern at my pack and cry, "*Pago! Pago! Pago!*"

*Pago* is Spanish for payment. I knew this, but chose to feign otherwise.

"What d'you mean—*pago*?" I cried, intensely irritated. "What's *pago*? What the devil's *pago*? What the blue blazes is *pago*?"

"*Pago, pago, pago! Pago!—Pago!*"

Fairly dancing with rage, the incensed consumo grabbed hold of me and dragged me, violently resisting, back to his shack. For here, he must have thought, was an open-and-shut case of smuggling. Here was I, a foreigner, attempting to steal into Leon at dead of night with a heavy pack. *Pardiez!* He had caught a daring *contrabandista* with the goods. *Bravo! Viva la República!*

His triumph, however, was short-lived. Instead of the contraband (comestibles, upon which, in Spain, there is a tax) which he expected to find in the pack, he found merely those relics of my riotous past, those souvenirs of my former luxurious life as a tramp on the Toby, which, on setting out, I had religiously burdened myself with, as a sort of penance, in order to flagellate, as it were, the Tramp-Regal flesh: namely, a drum, a groundsheet, a blanket, a pair of explorer's gloves, a complete set of toe-rags, a bundle of firewood gathered in a private planting, a list of false names and addresses, and an instrument for producing rude noises behind policemen's backs. Also, amongst these effects of my happy past, the consumo found the causes of

## THE IRONY OF IT!

my unhappy present: wallets, that is, containing an unlimited supply of money.

"Pardon, *señor*," was all he could say. So, reviling him for a uniformed official, I shouldered my pack and strode rapidly into Leon.

The city was ablaze with lights. Crowds strolled about the streets. Cafés and bars hummed with life. The time, instead of being long past midnight, as I had supposed it must be, was only a little after ten o'clock!

I did not have to enquire about hotels, thank heaven. They were all over the place, their names in electric lights. So I applied at the first I came to—the Hotel Niebro—and ten minutes later, after having changed my sweat-soaked shirt and given myself a rinse, I was sitting down to what had danced alluringly before me all day like a will o' the wisp: an umpteenth-course dinner.

But alas, the pity of it! The irony of it! The downright, devilish cruelty of it! When I came to eat the food for which my starved body yearned and craved, lo and behold! I found I couldn't eat it. My appetite was entirely gone. I was too tired to eat!

Nor was that all. For afterwards, when I came to fling myself on my bed and seek the rest and oblivion that every part of me cried out for—can you believe it?—I found that I could not rest! I found that I could not sleep! I found that my superlative tiredness—— But why go on? Let us draw a veil over the suffering of this night, and call it a day.

Next morning, with my appetite returned in full force, I breakfasted on a cup of coffee and a roll, paid the bill, which came to four shillings, and sought the shortest way out of Leon.

For Leon, what I saw of it, had disappointed me.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

In place of being ancient and romantic, which was how I had pictured this former capital of the one-time kingdom of Leon, whose walls have harboured Roman, Visigoth, and Moor, I found it new and modern, a typical present-day Spanish city, with telephones, electric light, wireless, central heating, chewing-gum machines, and talking-picture shows, entirely different from the ' gloomy town ' of Borrow's time.

Yet here, as in most Spanish cities, the very old jostled and mixed harmoniously with the very new, creating, in the contrasts resulting therefrom, an atmosphere so peculiarly Spanish that no other adjective save 'Spanish' can describe it. Thus, for instance, great as is the contrast between Leon's recently installed American Bar, with its futuristic gadgets and fitments, and the centuries-old Gothic Cathedral, yet somehow the contrast does not offend. Its essential Spanishness divests it of any hint of incongruity, as is the case also, for example, where Old Testament ox-teams and asses are encountered in traffic jams alongside high-powered touring-cars de luxe, or where the blare of a wireless loudspeaker is heard drowning the primitive cry of the water-seller, or even where an Air Force officer is seen giving alms to a wandering palmer complete with sandals, staff, and cockleshell !

The road out of Leon passes through the poor quarter where the houses are built of *adobe*, or sun-dried bricks of yellow mud ; and here I could scarcely walk for the strings of laden mules and cavalcades of panniered donkeys streaming in through the city gate—exactly as they have been streaming in since long before the days of Cervantes—while overhead in the blue, blue sky, accentuating the Spanishness of the scene, droned two passenger aeroplanes.

Onward I strode up the dusty road between double

## MANSILLA

rows of poplar trees, past places where men were making the adobe bricks: mixing the yellow clay, shovelling it into wooden moulds, arranging the moulded bricks in the sun to dry. And behind me, behind Leon, the long, unbroken wall of the distant Cantabrians stood up surprisingly distinct.

The great plain still encircled me, flatter now than before. The peasants working in the fields were no longer women, I noticed, but men. There were neither fences nor hedges nor walls. The vast dome of the sky, under which played a breeze, arched above the tawny, sun-baked levelness of the earth like a gigantic cupola of azure-tinted crystal. The sun blazed and burned. The poplar-lined road, without bend or break or turn in any part of its length, visible to the horizon, ran on ahead into the south. And along that road you must imagine me trudging for twenty uneventful kilometres, hot and hungry and thirsty, and coming at last, at high noon, to the little walled town of Mansilla.

It was like coming to an oasis.

For here a winding river waters green meadows, and tall tapering trees wave on high. And when I crossed the river and entered through the ancient walls of crumbling adobe into the network of narrow, cobbled lanes within, where sunlight and silence reigned, and where the tiny windows of some of the mud houses were guarded by iron grilles, I felt I was come out of Europe into Africa—Africa of the Moors, where God is Allah and Mohammed is His prophet.

So deserted, indeed, were the streets of Mansilla (which is the same Mansilla as that mentioned in the chapters of *Gil Blas* dealing with Gil's escape from the robbers' cave) that I had the dickens of a time finding someone to direct me to a fonda.

But find someone I eventually did, and in due course disposed of a dinner of wine, bread, eggs, fish, chops, lettuce, cheese, and oranges and coffee, at the modest outlay of half a crown.

A *fonda*, by the way, is a mysterious kind of place. It is neither an inn, a restaurant, nor a boarding-house, yet it is all three. And it rarely advertises itself. To find a *fonda* the traveller has almost invariably to ask to be directed to it, and he generally discovers that it is a private house in a back street, with absolutely no sign or indication of its being what it is. But as soon as he makes his wants known he is admitted and shown into the dining-room, where what appear to be regular patrons are dining. And the dinners are always course-dinners, well cooked and served, and the charge is rarely ever more than 5 pesetas, or two-and-six.

But to secure sleeping accommodation in a *fonda* is a different matter. I don't know whether it was because I was afoot and a foreigner, but, anyway, always when I myself went to a *fonda* and asked to be put up for the night I was flatly refused. On the other hand, if I had a guide with me, someone, that is, who knew about the place and had accompanied me and made the necessary enquiries, I was generally admitted.

That, then, is the *fonda*, another name for which is *casa de huéspedes*, or guest-house.

From Mansilla the poplar-lined road led me unwaveringly south over the boundless plain. White sand had been strewed on the recently tarred surface of the road, so the going was painful. The reflected blaze and heat of the sun blinded and burned me. I had to walk with my head turned aside, my eyes fixed on the cool green of the young corn in the wayside fields.

Kilometre after kilometre fell away, and, with

## ISLAND PUEBLOS

frequent halts for a rest and a smoke, I plodded on through the idyllic afternoon and evening, meeting nobody except an occasional donkey rider who would pass with an "*Hola!*" or an "*Adiós!*" his long-eared mount padding tirelessly in the dust.

The great treeless plain grew tawnier and tawnier. On the vast, flat, empty expanse of it, like isles of an archipelago, at long distances apart and far removed from the road, appeared island communities: compact little *pueblos*, or townships, made entirely of yellow adobe, each one clustered devotedly about a solitary chapel tower. And so far apart were they, and so alike in colour and substance to the tawny plain, that only the chapel towers disclosed their whereabouts. And at sunset, when each tight little island lit its lights, the scene was most strange and fantastical.

With darkness the cicadas began their incessant singing, singing, singing, and so, putting my best foot forward, I made a bee-line for the nearest pueblo, which lay a long league off, reaching it after an hour's march.

Seeing an open door with light streaming out and people standing talking within, I went forward and asked if that was the posada, only to be told that it wasn't the posada, and that in Matallana, which was the name of that pueblo, there was no posada, but that if I accompanied the girl of the house she would guide me to a venta where bed and board might be obtained.

Thanking my informers, who devoutly wished me god-speed, I gave my hand to the girl in question, a dusky little bare-footed muchacha of about ten or eleven years, with large Madonna-like eyes, and together we silently picked our way through deserted lanes lighted at long intervals by solitary electric

bulbs fixed high up on the mud walls of the houses. And from the strip of night sky visible between the rooftops, bright stars looked down ; and a warm wind, full of the scent of the sagra, played gently around us ; and the chorussing of the cicadas came softly in, like the lilt of a lullaby, from the great plain outside ; and somewhere music was being languorously plucked from a guitar. And as I listened I caught the melody—a melody so familiar and so completely appropriate to the place and time, that it startled me. I could hardly believe my ears. Yet I heard aright. The melody was none other than that of the old song : *In a Little Spanish Town 'Twas on a Night Like This !*

After threading the dark lanes for long enough, my guide brought me to a *venta*, and I thanked her and gave her a nickel *real*, and she went off and I went in.

A *venta*, you must know, is a roadside inn ; but not the sort of inn we in this country know. It is generally little more than a hedge pub ; in some cases merely a hut of thatch, where drinks are to be had. And often, but not as a rule, the *ventero*, or innkeeper, will supply the traveller with food, such as bread and cheese and tinned sardines, but with little else. Very seldom, too, is there sleeping accommodation at a *venta*. For as a *fonda* is primarily a place for eats, so a *venta* is primarily a place for drinks. Still, both these terms are elastic, and you often come across proper hotels, and also road-houses with lunch-rooms and cabaret shows attached, calling themselves *fondas* and *ventas* indiscriminately.

Well, thanks be, this *venta* in Matallana proved of the caoutchouc variety. The *ventero*, who was lame in one foot and belonged to the Sancho Panza type of Spaniard, assured me that he could accom-

moderate me not only with eats and drinks, but also with a room for the night.

"And if you will tell me what you would like for supper," he concluded, "I'll prepare it. You can have anything."

Spanish innkeepers have spoken thus all down the centuries. "You can have anything" sounds all right, but it is a mere phrase. It really means "You can have anything I care to give you, and, as I have very little that I can give you, you'll have to like that little—or lump it." For Spanish innkeepers, being mostly peasants, are a sturdy, independent race of men, entirely different from the obsequious innkeepers of other lands. The only time they don't treat the traveller as a social equal is when they treat him as a social inferior. Which is why I have a great admiration for Spanish innkeepers.

Instead of telling this ventero, therefore, what I would like, I saved time and breath by asking him to give me what he had. And he did, too. With his own hands he thrust a bundle of dry twigs under a pan with fat in it, and kindled them, and when the fat was hot enough he broke three eggs into it, and fried them. And those three eggs, served in a tin plate, along with white bread and red wine, made my supper.

About half a dozen winebibbers deserted the bar to come and watch me eat. I was the first Englishman, they said, whom they had ever seen. And my former guide, the little muchacha with the large Madonna-like eyes, dropped in to buy sweets with the nickel I had given her; and she joined the sightseers, regarding me with an anxious, possessive air that seemed to say: "Mind your p's and q's, Tramp-Royal. Don't let a lady down. Remember—'twas I that brought you."



## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

Supper finished, I bade everybody good-night, and the ventero showed me upstairs to a perfectly appointed bedroom, fitted, as is usual nowadays in Spain even in the most remote villages, with electric light. And when this was snapped on, the immaculateness of everything absolutely dazzled me. There had been nothing quite like this in any of the swagger hotels I had already put up at. Yet—this wasn't a swagger hotel. It was a peasant dwelling made of mud and straw !

There, then, with the bright stars peeping in at the tiny window, and the song of the cicadas for a lullaby, I slept the night away.

## LAP THE FIFTH

### INTO OLD CASTILE

Brave new world—Marvellous morning—Into the south—  
At Mayorga—Seeking harbourage—"Are you for the Republic?"—A *posada*—Walkers round the world—The *alcoba*—  
—In Bernices—Dining under difficulties—Spanish barbers.

WAKING up next morning was like waking up in some brave new world. What with the blinding blue of the skies without, and the dazzling gold of the sunbeams within, my eyes suffered acute shock on first opening. Also the speckless whiteness of the bedsheets was a thing to marvel at. It was that utterly pure, immaculate whiteness seen only in snowdrifts and cumulus cloud masses. And where the sunbeams fell athwart, where the sheets were tumbled, the shadows were not grey, but blue, the ethereal blue of azure heavens.

While washing I noticed that the washstand was of the type very common in Spain. The bowl is an ordinary bowl, with this difference: in the bottom there is a little circular hole with a plug in it, so that instead of having to lift the bowl from the washstand to empty it, which usually is an awkward, splashy business, you merely withdraw the plug and the water escapes through the little hole, falling into a receptacle placed for that purpose underneath.

Downstairs I found the *ventero* with his wife and *niña* waiting for me to join them at their

morning snack : coffee-and-milk and dry bread ; so I joined them, and in a little while was ready to depart.

"What have I to pay ? " I asked.

Counting the items on his fingers, the ventero answered, "*Dos pesetas.*"

Two pesetas ! A night's board and lodging for a shilling ! But I gave him three pesetas ; or rather, I had to force him to accept three pesetas, and he fairly beamed with satisfaction.

"*Muchas gracias, señor,*" said he ; then added, accompanying me to the door, "You, of course, are walking round the world ? "

And thinking this to be merely a Spanish idiom for walking a long distance, I told him yes. He nodded.

"I thought so. Well—*Buen viaje. Vaya usted con Dios !*"

Eagerly I sought the road again, anxious to put as many kilometres as possible behind me while the day was yet young.

It was a marvellous morning, still very early. The sun, almost level with the eye, burned big and golden. In the blazing blue dome arching so loftily overhead, not a cloud was to be seen. The crystal clarity of the air was such that the most distant objects stood out sharply defined as though etched with a diamond. The air, moreover, was already warm. You knew it would be a day of much heat. All around, too, lay the great plain, baked and tawny, flatter than it had yet been, dotted with its fantastic island townships and their chapel towers, with dust-devils whirling across it. And far distant in the north, shimmering unreal as a mirage, like a range of ghost mountains, a long low line of blue sierras—the snow-capped barrier wall of the Cantabrians—haunted the horizon. It

## INTO THE SOUTH

was all so rich and strange, so foreign. I felt that I was back somewhere in a land of long ago—

“ . . . far away in some region old  
Where the rivers wander o'er sands of gold,  
And the burning rays of the ruby shine,  
And the diamond lights up the secret mine.”

Straight as a Roman way, and bordered at intervals with poplars, the road ran into the south. Along it I strode, making the white dust fly.

Lumbering farm wains and solitary donkey-riders, with an occasional horseman, were the only traffic. I, as usual, was the only pedestrian. With hardly a halt I sped onward over the sun-drenched plain, and about noon arrived at the adobe village of Alvires.

In the venta here I asked if I could have something to eat. And the ventero said certainly, that I could have anything. So I was forced to dine off fried eggs, dry bread, and *vino tinto*, which was all the ventero had. And the charge for this was one peseta, or sixpence.

By the by, if my always telling you the price like this, annoys you, then I'm sorry. But, previous to my setting out for the Peninsula, I enquired in vain, even at the best-informed travel agencies, for some idea of fonda and venta prices in the interior of Spain. So I promised myself that, for the benefit of possible followers in my footsteps, I would include, in any account I might write, this information.

To continue. While disposing of the above snack, I sat opposite the open door of the venta looking back along the road I had come ; and so level was the plain and so clear the atmosphere that I could actually see, distinct in every detail, as though it were merely a mile away, the place I had breakfasted at that morning. I mean Matallana.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

From Alvires southward the going was killing ; no grass verges, no bordering trees, not even telegraph poles ; nothing but choking dust, dazzling glare, arid heat, and the baking, tawny desert stretching to infinity all around. Sweating copiously I plodded on, and so passed out of the province of Leon into that of Valladolid, which is one of the eight provinces of Old Castile.

At about two o'clock I arrived at Mayorga—a town of dry, yellow mud built on a hill above a river of wet, yellow mud, crowned with a clock tower. Through its narrow, deserted, silent, smelly Moorish streets, where one side of the way was always drowned in cold-black shadow while the other was bathed in white-hot sunlight, I picked my way over irritating cobbles until I came to the Plaza, and saw a restaurant—the Café Victoria—into which I went, and was served, for two shillings odd, with a meal of wine, bread, soup, an omelette, chops, a ginger sweetmeat, and fruit.

Soon afterwards I sought the blinding, burning streets again, and, leaving the town by a picturesque old gateway, followed a cart-track across parched ploughlands, and regained the road.

Man, it was hot. My blood fairly simmered. To have continued walking would have been suicidal. So, as there were neither bush nor tree nor wall within sight, I stuck my stick into the top of a bank by the wayside, and, draping my coat over it, lay down in the shade thus afforded. And as the grass all around hummed and chirruped soothingly, I was no sooner laid down that I fell fast asleep.

When I awoke, the sun was half-way down the sky, and I resumed the road greatly refreshed.

It now rolled, the road did, rising and falling like a switchback and winding a little, which was a welcome change after days of undeviating straight-

## SEEKING HARBOURAGE

ness and unrelieved levelness. Also, hereabouts the Cantabrian Mountains passed from my ken, and I was shut of them for ever.

Sundown found me overlooking a place where the road fell away into a deep dip of the plain and soared up on the far side ; and in the bottom of this deep dip a compact little adobe village, Becilla, nestled about a chapel tower. So, lighting a cigarette, I sat down by the roadside until the short twilight darkened into night, when I got up and descended into the village.

" *Buenas noches, señor y caballero,*" said I, addressing the first person I met : a dirty, unshaven hombre reeking of aguardiente. " Can you tell me if there is a place here where a stranger, solitary, alone, and by himself, of inexhaustible means, can obtain harbourage for the night ? *Señor y caballero*, can you ? "

" Excellency, I can." The acrid breath of the hombre, breathed full in my face, bit my nostrils like ammonia fumes and caused my eyes to smart and water.

" Then, if you can, *señor y caballero*, do so."

Do so he did, while I shut my eyes and held a hand over both mouth and nose.

" Many thanks," said I, when he had finished and I could breathe again. " There is a *posada*, you say, at the foot of this *calle* ? "

" Excellency, there is."

" Then—*buenas noches*. And thanks again, *señor y caballero*. *Adiós !* "

" *Adiós*, Excellency. Depart with God."

" Remain with God, *señor y caballero*."

Proceeding down the *calle*, or street, to the foot, I found there what I sought : a wide arched gateway over which hung the sign *Posada*. Whereupon, passing in between great heavy double-doors to a

covered yardway within, I approached a big fat bloke who sat on a bench smoking and asked him where the posadero was.

"In there," he answered, waving me towards a large side-chamber where a number of people stood talking together.

In I went, hat in hand, and on my appearance everybody turned to look at me, while a little fat bloke detached himself from the group and asked what I wanted. He was the posadero.

"I am an Englishman," I explained, "with plenty of money—plenty of good money. Can you put me up for the night?"

The bloke asked if I had any *documentos*. I produced my passport. Everybody crowded round. The gilt crown embossed on the cover created a sensation. Everybody looked at it, then at one another, then at me.

"*Señor*," asked the posadero, pointing to the crown, "are—are you—are you for the Republic, *señor*?"

Now, inside my hat, decorating the satin lining, happened to be another gilt crown; so, drawing everybody's attention to this, I deliberately donned and doffed the hat two or three times, looking meaningly the while at the company. They exchanged glances, pleased glances. They understood.

"You are very welcome, *señor*," said the posadero, a wide grin splitting his fat face; then he added, significantly using the present tense, "Our Queen is English. Our King loves England."

From then on I was his fair-haired lad. He couldn't do enough for me. And he made the others, most of whom were members of his own numerous family, busy themselves on my behalf; ordering one upstairs to prepare my room, hustling another into the kitchen to get ready my supper, com-

## A POSADA

manding a third to fetch water, soap, and towels that I might wash ; and so on and so forth, until there was not a hand idle or a foot that was not hurrying in the entire posada.

This, like most posadas, was a huge rambling barn of a place, solid and ancient, in no way changed or different, you felt, since the days when the mad Don and his squire roamed the plains of La Mancha. It reminded you of the old English coaching inns described by Dickens and haunted by the ghosts of Claude Duval and Dick Turpin.

One posada is like another. The traveller enters through heavy, iron-studded double-doors to a covered yardway, from which side-rooms paved with stone flags give off, and which leads directly to the stables. Also, flights of stairs generally lead up to rooms above. And in this yardway there are always wooden stands holding earthenware jars full of drinking water, and pegs with harness hanging on them, and cocks and hens, and a goat or two. And carters and donkey-men and muleteers are always around. For, be it noted, there is nothing exclusive about a posada ; it is really a low place, a proper howff, the last resort of the benighted traveller ; and it exists principally for the accommodation of these same carters, donkey-men, and muleteers, who generally sleep in the stable alongside their beasts. And although rooms are always obtainable, meals are not always so. In a lot of posadas the traveller has to go outside and forage for food, which, sometimes, the posadero will cook for him ; and even when meals are supplied, they are rough-and-ready affairs, with little of variety about them, consisting for the most part of fried eggs, bread, and wine, with an occasional salad or some fried meat thrown in.

A hostelry similar to a posada (at least in outward



appearance, for I never happened to put up at one, but merely noted in passing) is the *parador*, meaning halting-place, or pull-up.

Well, to get back to this posada in Becilla. Waited on hand and foot by the posadero, his wife, his wife's mother, and his four sons and five daughters, I leisurely disposed of the supper set before me: fried eggs, bread, wine, fried meat, cheese, a glass of milk, and oranges. Then everybody took chairs and we went out and sat in the great doorway to talk and laugh and exchange greetings with passing villagers, while the starry dark throbbed and thrilled with the cicadas' song.

"*Señor*," asked mine host, among other questions, "you, I suppose, are walking round the world?"

Whereupon, thinking this to be merely a Spanish idiom for walking a long distance, I told him, as I had told the ventero at Matallana, that I was.

His next question, however, showed me that I thought wrong.

"What countries," he asked, "have you already been in?"

I nearly swallowed my cigarette.

"What countries have I already been in? Why, I have been in North America, and Ireland, and Scotland, and Wales, and England, and France, and now I am in Spain making my way in the direction of Africa."

"Africa? *Madonna mía, señor*, but it will be hot walking in Africa!"

I said that there could be no doubt about that.

"But what made you suppose that I was walking round the world?" I asked.

"Your pack, *señor*. Most of the foot-travellers who have put up here had a pack like yours. They were Germans, and had very little money. And they said they were walking round the world. So

## THE ALCOPA

I charged them very little for their bed and supper. But sometimes, *señor*—sometimes I thought that they only said they were walking round the world in order to be charged very little for their bed and supper. What do *you* think, *señor* ? ”

I told him I thought it was time I went to bed.

At that everybody rose, and we went in, and I wished everybody “ *Hasta mañana !* ” and everybody wished me “ *Hasta mañana !* ” ; and the posadero, he came and whispered in my ear, “ Our Queen is English. Our King loves England.” And I deliberately donned and doffed my hat two or three times, looking meaningly at the company. And they exchanged pleased glances. And as I climbed the stair to my bedroom I thought to myself :

“ Don Alfonso’s noo awa’,  
Safely ower the friendly main ;  
Mony a he’rt will break in twa  
Should he ne’er come back again.”

My room was a large, low, sparsely furnished chamber, the floor laid with red tiles. In one wall two tiny windows let in the night air and the cicadas’ song, and on the wall facing it hung a picture of the Virgin with a crucifix under it, while under that again stood a table covered with a fancy cloth and bearing a large dish of oranges.

But this room wasn’t the bedroom. The bedroom proper—*alcoba*, or alcove, as it is called—was a dark, windowless, heavily curtained recess at the far end, mysterious and Moorish-looking, containing two beds. During the burning siesta hours, you imagined, it would make an ideal retreat ; nay, it was constructed, you saw, expressly for that purpose. And there I laid me down, like a prince of the Thousand Nights and One, to sleep and dream until a reasonable hour next morning.

When I got downstairs everybody was already up and doing. "*Buenos días, señor,*" greeted me at every turn. While two of the posadero's daughters were on their knees scrubbing floors, the other three, dressed to kill, and with black lace mantillas draped over their oiled and perfumed tresses, were just departing for chapel. For it was *Domingo*, or Sunday.

Breakfast, consisting of the inevitable coffee-and-milk and bread, I quickly ate, then paid the bill—two shillings—and, bidding the posadero and his family goodbye, climbed up the long, steep, tree-lined road out of the village and was soon hastening over the sun-baked billows of the plain again.

It was another brilliant, crystal-clear day. The sun blazed from a cloudless sky. The heat was grilling. Walking was sweated labour. The soles of my feet rapidly developed the same high temperature as the hot tar surfacing the road, and blisters formed. The skin on the back of my hands grew fiery red and swelled up and peeled off. And a great thirst tormented me.

In the course of the day I passed through two adobe villages, the first of which, called *Something del Campo*, I came upon shortly after leaving Becilla, while the second, called Bernices, showed up early in the afternoon.

Here, in Bernices, I went into a venta and asked if I could have a midday meal. And the old woman in black who kept the place said certainly I could. And she disappeared into the kitchen and was away long enough to have cooked a six-course dinner. But picture my disappointment when, on reappearing, instead of placing before me the first course of the expected six-course dinner, she callously threw down an empty tin plate and a rusty tin of sardines—and nothing else!

I nearly wept. Putting a hand into a pocket,

## DINING UNDER DIFFICULTIES

however, I withdrew therefrom a modicum of the Tramp-Royal Millions and exhibited it to the old dame, explaining, first, that it was perfectly good currency ; second, that I had an unlimited supply of it, and third, that I would pay her any monetary amount she cared to name if only she would remove from before me that travesty of a Sunday dinner and replace it with a proper meal.

This impressed her. She disappeared again and my hopes rose—only to sink on her reappearance. For what she returned with was not a meal, but a loaf, the round, iron-crustcd, case-hardened dollop of indigestibility that is the Spanish loaf, and between which and a millstone there is only this difference : a millstone has a hole in it. And along with the loaf the old lady brought a jug of wine, the red, revolting, corrosive sublimate that is Spanish wine. And that was all she had in the house, she said ; sardines, bread, and wine—what more could hungry heart desire ?

I gave up. I accepted my fate. In quiet desperation, in a raging calm, I attacked that mockery of a meal, tearing in at it with hate and murder in my heart and peace and good will toward men on my face. For by this time, you must know, half the villagers had drifted in and were gathered round the wealthy English *caballero* watching interestedly while he ate, and constantly asking him if he had ever before tasted bread so fine, or wine so rare, or sardines so superlatively succulent !

From the *venta* I moved to the barber's shop for a shave. And I have cause to remember that shave, because it was the only time that a Spanish barber shaved me with hot water ; all the other Spanish barbers who shaved me invariably used cold water.

The *barbería*, or *peluquería*, as a barber's is called in Spain, is, next to the *café* and the tobacconist's,

the shop most encountered. In lots of villages which I passed through it was often the only visible shop. Outside of towns and cities it is generally just a tiny parlour of a place opening off the street, with a striped sun-blind hanging in the doorway ; furnished with a bench, a chair, a mirror, a shelf with one or two bottles, and little else. And the chair you sit on is rarely comfortable : the head-rest is hard and supports only the back of the head and not the neck. A shave, too, is a lengthy business, taking usually about half an hour. For the *barbero* shaves you with cold water and seldom rubs in the lather with his fingers, so that he has to go over your face with the razor again and again. And when he has finished shaving you he invariably trims your hair at the back and above the ears, which he does neatly and expertly ; in fact, he is a better hairdresser than he is a barber. And the charge for all this is usually only about threepence in Spanish money, though often, if you are a foreigner, the barber cunningly leaves it to you, hoping, I suppose, that you will give him in mistake three shillings, or maybe even three pounds !

## LAP THE SIXTH

### THE ROAD TO VALLADOLID

Medina de Rio Seco—*Paseos* and *alamedas*—Waiting and hoping—The roadmender—The Guardia Civil—Unquestionable efficiency—The British passport—Unlike likenesses—"Ah, the good beano!"—Confession of a winebibber—The first bottle—Fiesta into fiasco—At the Puente Mayor—Unfinished symphony.

THE day's march brought me in the early evening to Medina de Rio Seco, City of the Dry River, a compact little old tumbledown town clustered about a Gothic church, in a dip of the plain that used once to be a lake.

The main road, instead of running through the town, describes a semicircle round it, but the packed mass of the place is cloven in two by a most picturesque high street, whose cobbled way is so narrow that when two panniered donkeys meet they can just scrape past and no more. And here the sidewalks are piazzas; they run under a continuation of low arches supported by ancient stone pillars, and the shops lining the piazzas are little dark smelly dens of places. Indeed, the whole town smells as most old and picturesque Spanish towns smell—as though the plumbers and midden-men had been on strike since the Year One. And at the bottom of the high street, which was a-reek with garbage, there was dumped an enormous pile of oranges. And people were buying these oranges and eating them. And I bought some and ate them—and they were the sweetest I ever tasted.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

Where this street branches off from the main road there is an hotel—the Esperanza—so here I booked a room for the night, and, learning that supper wouldn't be ready until nine o'clock, I spruced myself up and sallied forth to see what was to be seen.

It being Sunday night the streets were full of strollers. Cafés were busy, and wine-shops and beer-bars were doing a roaring trade. Through the open door of a dance-hall in a side lane came the rhythmic blare of a jazz band. On my way up the high street I was accosted by a beggar, a shoe-black, a tie-seller, a lottery-ticket vendor, and by another beggar. At the top I came upon the town's principal rendezvous: a place of walks and shady trees, where the townspeople in their Sunday best were strolling about listening to a brass band.

These *paseos* and *alamedas*, as they are called, are a feature of Spanish towns and cities. They are promenades planted with shrubs and shady trees, whither the people resort of an evening to parade up and down and confab together. For the Spaniard is a gregarious animal; there is nothing he loves better than fraternising with his kind. Nor are these mass promenadings rowdy affairs. On the contrary, they are marked by a sedateness of behaviour and a general sobriety of conduct exemplary in the highest degree.

I strolled about this alameda at Rio Seco marvelling. A quieter, more harmless, better behaved Sunday night crowd I had never seen. The modesty of the señoritas, the dignity of the señoras, and the natural politeness and innate mannerliness of the caballeros came as a revelation. I looked in vain for a hooligan element. I looked in vain for spooning couples. I looked in vain for young men and girls who had come there purposely to pick each other up. I

## WAITING AND HOPING

looked in vain for pickpockets, plain-clothes men, and Peeping Toms. And when I compared what I saw with what I should have seen had it been a Sunday night crowd in Hyde Park, London, or Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow, I had to go aside and absolutely blush for Britain !

Most of the caballeros and young bloods, by the way, wore their overcoat *á la Española* : that is, they wore it thrown over the shoulders like a cloak, leaving the sleeves dangling empty. This gave them a most romantic and picturesque appearance—a fact of which these caballeros and young bloods were well aware. For you mustn't suppose that Spaniards are a faultless race of angels. Being human beings, they have their vices and weaknesses ; and amongst their weaknesses a childish vanity in their personal appearance takes pride of place.

At nine o'clock, when I returned to the Esperanza for supper, the duenna and her maids looked at me askance, obviously offended at my punctuality. So I went out again and returned at ten, and they promptly set before me a dandy meal—at twenty-five minutes to eleven.

Next morning I was down at eight, was served with coffee and roll at nine, paid my bill—three shillings—at a quarter past, and didn't receive my change till after the half-hour.

That hotel certainly lived up to its name. Esperanza is from the verb *esperar*, which signifies to wait and to hope !

I did not linger in Medina de Rio Seco, though it was May Day and a *fiesta* was to be held, but merely stopped long enough to collect more oranges from the enormous pile at the bottom of the high street—where it had lain out all night uncovered—then, climbing with the road as it rose through a waste countryside of dried-up streams, I was soon



bowling southward again over the breezy billows of the great plain.

At first the sun blazed mercilessly from a brazen sky, but gradually clouds crept up from the horizon to veil it and make grey the day, and the wind, freshening, foretold rain.

The way was uninteresting, and the railway ran unfenced alongside the road. For a couple of kilometres I had for company a cheery soul, a *peón caminero*, or roadmender, with whom—though I understood less than half of what he said, and he understood practically nothing of what I talked about—I passed a merry time.

He hailed from the Basque country beyond the Cantabrians, he told me, so I told him I came from there, too, which gladdened him so that he prodded me in the ribs and punched me in the kidneys. My praising the splendid cities of the Biscayan coast sent him into transports. I assured him that San Sebastian Bay was the most beautiful bay on earth, and he gibbered with joy. I swore that the Siete Calles of Bilbao were unique enough to be counted among the seven wonders of the world, and he danced with delight. When I waxed lyrical over the amazonian physique of the women fish-porters of Santander, he waxed lyrical likewise—so I refrained from commenting on the wee, shabby, comical Keystone cops of the same fair city.

On arriving at the roadside *casilla*, or little cottage, where he, as a roadmender, had his abode, the cheery soul introduced me to his wife and numerous family, and after much talk and more rib-prodding and kidney-punching, he bade me a protracted farewell and I proceeded on my way.

The morning, with its leaden skies and threat of rain, passed without further event, and at midday a little township, standing about a mile back from

## THE GUARDIA CIVIL

the road, made its welcome appearance. Turning off down an approach road, therefore, I was soon traversing the narrow lanes of the place in eager search of an eating-house.

Not a soul did I see to make enquiry of until I came to where two Civil Guards sat smoking at the door of their *cuartel*, or barrack ; whereupon, saluting, and receiving a salute in return, I acquainted them with my needs, wants, and requirements.

These Guardias always amused me. Before going to Spain I was told, and read in books, that the Guardia Civil was a highly efficient and intelligent body of men, superior in every way to common or garden police.<sup>1</sup> In fact—the study of the cop insect in all its ludicrous forms and phases being my principal sport and pastime—it was the desire to investigate and observe in its natural habitat this rare and phenomenal species of the pest that had motivated me ulteriorly in choosing the Peninsula as my next stamping ground. But on my very first clapping eyes on a Guardia, which happened at the frontier town of Irun, I was rudely disillusioned. First, the Guardia wore uniform ; and as you and I and all sensible folk know, no man wearing uniform can lay claim to a first-rate intelligence. Second, he wore a sword and pistol and carried a rifle, and, as you and I and all sensible folk likewise

<sup>1</sup> " When the Republic came in, such a body of men was a recognised danger to Socialist aspirations, so a definite policy has been carried out to ruin both its *esprit de corps* and prestige. The Guardia Civil was forbidden to interfere at any meetings or disturbances, as in former days they would have in the ordinary course ; they have been compelled to stand by and watch acts committed contrary to all pre-conceived ideas of duty. Besides having some of the desired psychological effect on the internal spirit of the corps, this has seriously damaged its prestige with the general public, and its influence is no longer what it used to be."—Extract from " The Crisis in Spain " by the Marquis del Moral in the *English Review* for November 1933.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

know, no really adult person is ever found wearing a sword and pistol and carrying a rifle ; only little boys, and army and navy officers, and play actors, and lunatics, and kings, and suchlike irresponsibles have any excuse for wearing swords and pistols and carrying rifles : that is, they don't know any better. So, I say, I was rudely disillusioned, and my interest in the Guardia Civil suffered a birth-death.

Of the efficiency of these Spanish cops, though, there can be no question. They are incontestably the most efficient body of uniformed loafers ever organised. As doers of nothing they are without parallel. By them, idling has been raised to an unsurpassable pitch of perfection. All the while I was in Spain the only recognisable police work I saw them engaged in was imbibing liquor and chatting to señoritas ; and the only other occasions when I observed them doing anything more than just stroll about in pairs and sit about in couples, were those occasions when they strolled about in foursomes and sat about in quartettes.

To return. On my acquainting the two Civil Guards with my needs, wants, and requirements, I learned that I had come a mile out of my way for nothing. There was no public eating-house of any kind in the township, it appeared, except the posada, and the posada was back on the main road, just along from where I had turned off.

Thanking the cops for this information, and muttering under my breath, I turned back down the approach road, and had gone nearly a hundred yards when a shout from the Guardias recalled me. They had just remembered that they had forgotten to remind each other that it is a Guardia's duty to examine the credentials of all suspicious-looking foreigners. So I handed them my passport, and they perused it with all the astonishment and amusement

## THE BRITISH PASSPORT

that so ridiculous a document merits ; then, taking note of the number, which was all they could take note of, the rest being Greek to them, they returned the thing and let me go.

And as I trudged back the mile to the main road, with my belly in my boots, I told myself things about passports in general, and about the British passport in particular.

The British passport, I told myself, must surely be the most stupid, the most useless, the most deceiving, as well as the most embarrassing and insulting document that ever emanated from a Government office.

It is everything that a passport ought not to be.

Although mine, which cost the staggering sum of fifteen shillings, is valid for all the countries of Europe, including Russia and Turkey, yet, incredible as it may seem, it is printed in one language only—English !

True, isolated words such as Passport, Description, etc., are duplicated in French, but the items of the Description—the most important part of the passport, one would suppose—are not so duplicated. Consequently the sum total of information that a Frenchman can extract from the thing is the futile fact that : “ *Ce passeport contient 32 pages.* ” — “ This passport contains 32 pages.”

Throughout Spain, with the solitary exception of the official at Irun on the frontier, I had invariably to translate the contents of my passport into Spanish for the benefit of the many Guardias, etc., who asked to see it. For it was Greek to them all—save, maybe, two, who, understanding French, knew that it really was a passport and that it contained 32 pages.

“ *Señor,*” said a Guardia to me once, “ though I accept your word that this book is your passport,

I have no proof that it is. I cannot read a single word of it. . . . Here are you, a foreigner, travelling in a foreign country, and here am I, an official of that country ; and on my asking you for credentials, what do you do ? You present me this book that has not a single word in it that I can understand. Is that polite ? Is that courteous ? Is it even sensible ? It is not. It is impolite, discourteous, nonsensical, and it embarrasses and insults me, *señor*. . . . Then this photograph—it bears no resemblance to you whatsoever. And this specimen signature—I have compared it with this other which you were good enough to write for me, and they are both as unlike as can be. How is that ? ”

I explained. I told him that all British passport photographs were alike in their unlikeness ; that, as Bishops and Archbishops were photographed to look like moral perverts and homicidal maniacs, so I, a notorious rogue and vagabond with a police record, had been photographed to look like an honest, respectable, law-abiding citizen. It was just an old British passport custom. Then I explained about the specimen signature. I showed him that the strip of pink paper on which it had to be written, instead of having a surface easy to write on, was so grained and proofed that writing on it was wellnigh impossible ; the signature having to be gone over at least three times before it became even visible ; the result being a signature that was as much like a signature as a Government official is like a sensible man.

Lastly, turning to the Regulations printed on the inside back cover, I read aloud the crowning absurdity : “ CAUTION—This passport is a valuable document.”

Once back on the main road, I easily found the posada which the Civil Guards had told me about.

"AH, THE GOOD BEANO!"

It was the only house in sight, and stood just along from where I had turned off.

"*Señora*," said I to the old peasant dame in black who appeared to my hand-clap, "I am hungry, and would like something to eat. What can you give me?"

"I can give you fried eggs, *señor*," she replied, as I knew she would, "and bread—and *beano*!"

I shuddered.

"*Señora*," I said, "I know that you can give me fried eggs and bread and *beano*, but can't you give me anything else? I would like a change. I would very much appreciate a change. For days now, *señora*, I have been living on fried eggs and bread and *beano* till the very mention of them sickens me. Have you no fried meat, say, or potatoes, or pie, or—or anything?"

"No, *señor*. Only fried eggs and bread and *beano*. *Beano*! *señor*. Ah, the good *beano*!"

I shuddered a second time.

"*Señora*——?" I began.

"Yes, *señor*?"

"*Señora*, you say—just like that—'good old *beano*!' No?"

"Yes, *señor*. I say—just like that—'good old *beano*!' "

"Exactly, *señora*. Well, *señora*, I—I don't say—just like that—'good old *beano*!' "

"No, *señor*? You don't say 'good old *beano*!' ? Just like that—no?"

"No, *señora*. NO!"

"Then wha——?"

"I say 'bad old *beano*!' I say 'abominable old *beano*!' I say—just like that, *señora*, just like that—I say 'CURSE OLD BEANO!' "

And with that, afraid lest my detestation of *beano* should provoke me into taking a sock at the old

dame, I turned and fled, fuming, down the hungry road to Valladolid.

For *beano*, let me explain, is the peasant pronunciation of *vino*, meaning wine; *v* and *b* being interchangeable. And if ever there was a word that made a man see red, that word was *beano* and that man was I.

It was the way the peasants said it. "Beano!" they would cry rapturously, with faces wreathed in smiles and eyes dancing, as though it were nectar they were announcing, and as if it were the *open sesame* to an elysium of delirious delights and excruciating ecstasies: this Spanish wine, this *vino tinto*, this red, revolting, corrosive sublimate that tastes as much like the juice of grapes as vinegar tastes like honey.

But let me confess. All my life previously, you are to know, I had only read about wine, only looked at it in pictures. But as I had tasted, and liked, fruit-wine, I fondly imagined that all other wines were likewise sweet and pleasant; so sweet and pleasant, indeed, that it was understandable that even cultured gentlemen went off their nut about them. And when I heard Old Khayyam speak out loud and bold to the effect that a jug of wine and very little else was all that was needed to make the wilderness a paradise, I held him wholly guiltless of hyperbole. Given a jug of wine—wine, that is, as potable as fruit-wine—the rest followed. For wasn't wine the greatest blessing the gods had bestowed on man? Wasn't it the quintessence of all that was sweet and palatable, eh? Sure, it was. The books said so, the pictures said so. It was an accepted fact. Hence, as it was likewise an accepted fact that wine was also a mocker and strong drink was raging, I eagerly looked forward to the time when I should experience the bliss of quaffing real

## THE FIRST BOTTLE

wine, and of being mocked and enraged by it. With the poet, I sighed for a draught of vintage that hath been cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth, tasting of Flora and the country green, dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth—for a beaker full of the warm South, full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene, with beaded bubbles winking at the brim, and purple-stained mouth, that I might drink and leave the world and fade away through magic casements opening on the foam of multitudinous beers and wines incarnadine, that would make me look green and see red. In short, I impatiently awaited the time when I should experience that night-before-the-morning-after feeling.

When that time came, disillusionment was instantaneous and complete.

It happened in Paris, in a café on the Avenue de la Grande Armée. Thrilling with anticipatory delight, I uncorked my first bottle of wine—*vin rouge*, it was—and filled a glass. And it looked great. I admit that. The books and pictures hadn't lied. Its deep rich ruby colour warmed the cockles of my heart. I glowed. Reverently raising the wine to my lips, I took a sip, rolled it over my tongue, swallowed it—and hastily reached for water, thoroughly disillusioned and disgusted. For instead of being most sweet and palatable, like fruit-wine, the cursed stuff was most bitter and unpalatable, like medicine. . . . Ugh! . . . And it was the same with all the other wines I experimented with, both in France and Spain. Red wine, white wine, so-called sweet wine, sherry, claret, port, burgundy, etc., etc., and the different beers; not a single one but left a taste that was nauseating and lastingly bitter. And the Spanish red wine not only tasted bad, it smelt bad. It positively stank—of pigskin. . . . Pah! . . . These insanitary Latins; trust them



to think of storing the alleged juice of the grape in the skin of swine—after paddling about in it with their bare feet, the dirty beasts!

No; though wine may be the gods' own nectar to some folk, it is rat poison to me. And if it is my 'ignorant' palate that makes it so, then I thank heaven for that. For before I would 'educate' my palate to a pitch where what is bitter seems sweet, and what is bad seems good, I—I—I would become a cop!

Through a level waste sparsely dotted with trees the road to Valladolid ran straight ahead for wearisome kilometres. Along it I strode at a rattling rate, fuming and famishing. In the course of the afternoon another pueblo a mile back from the road showed up, but I ignored it and passed on. Then a great wind sprang up and the skies began to leak.

Just at that, though, the road developed a bend, ran on a bit, then bent again, and as I turned the second bend, lo! I found myself at the top of a rapidly descending declivity, seven kilometres long, at the bottom of which, in a wide valley under misty mesas, lay the city of Valladolid.

Down this declivity I pelted in the wind and rain, sheltered at first by a ridge of hill paralleling the road. But ere long, when that ended, I was walking exposed to the full fury of the storm.

I was not alone, however. Others besides myself were abroad. The road was quite peopled. Carts full of Maymakers in bedraggled holiday attire passed, hurrying citywards in company with numerous parties afoot. The fiesta, it was plain, had developed into a fiasco.

At the Puente Mayor, or main bridge, on which the road crosses the Pisuerga river into Valladolid, a crowd stood sheltering under the shed belonging

## AT THE PUENTE MAYOR

to the consumos, or tollmen. And as I, a miserable-looking figure in my sodden clothes, squelched past, a consumo came running after me, calling on me to halt.

"What do you want?" I demanded, halting.

"I want to see the comestibles you have in your pack," he shouted through the rain. "Come in out of the wet and let me examine them."

"I have no comestibles!" I shouted back.

"Your friend said that, too!"

"My what?"

"Friend. The other blond one. The German vagabundo. A quarter of an hour ago."

"You're loco. I've got no friend.—What d'you take me for? A tramp?"

"Yes."

Turning back with the bloke to the shelter of the crowded shed, I unslung my pack and opened it, still protesting.

"See! I have no comestibles."

The consumo saw.

"Neither you have, *señor*. Pardon. My mistake. . . . What's this?"

This was one of those relics of my riotous past, one of those souvenirs of my former life as a tramp on the Toby which, as previously related, I had religiously burdened myself with, as a sort of penance, in order to flagellate, as it were, the Tramp-Regal flesh. The consumo examined it curiously. And well he might.

"What is it?" he asked, and the people sheltering in the shed crowded closer.

"It is a musical instrument," I explained. "A one-note musical instrument."

"And what is it called?"

"The—the 'berry."

"Berry? Ah! But of what use is it if it only

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

emits one note, *señor*? On what occasions does one play upon it?"

"It is of great use. One plays upon it on those occasions when one desires to express the extent of one's admiration and approval of anyone. Hence the saying: 'To give the 'berry.' It is astonishingly effective."

"And how does one play upon it, *señor*?"

"One plays upon it by applying one's lips to the wooden mouthpiece and blowing one's breath into it, sudden and strong."

"Is it permitted——? Would you——? Could *I* play upon it?"

"Certainly, *señor*. By all means. Give yourself, and your fellow-consumos, the 'berry. Sudden and strong!"

And, believe me or believe me not, he did. Applying, in all innocence and trustfulness, the odious instrument to his lips, the consumo blew his breath into it sudden and strong, very sudden and very strong . . . and the crowd . . . they must be laughing yet!

## LAP THE SEVENTH

### SPICE OF THE PINE

In Valladolid—German vagabundo—A Spanish cinema—The programme—An umpteen-course dinner—Departure from Valladolid—The man from America—Mojados—A colourful cavalcade—First sight of the Guadarramas—Arrival at Olmedo—Monarchist not Anarchist—"I, too, am a poet"—Cryptic scrawl—Spectacular exit.

ON the other side of the Puente Mayor the tramlines begin. These I followed, therefore, and they led me through a succession of bright streets to the main Plaza of Valladolid, in the centre of the city.

Here, the rain having ceased, the pavements and piazzas were crowded with strollers. Everywhere I looked, too, I saw uniforms. It was like a city in war-time. Young raw boys wearing ill-fitting army khaki were very numerous. Civil Guards, Shock Guards, and Municipal Guards, all of them armed, loitered in the offing, waiting for somebody to start something.

As I made to cross the Plaza a big red motor vehicle with an armed body of Terrorists sitting in it back to back, like firemen, nearly ran me down. And as I jumped for safety I collided with another jay-walker, sending him spinning.

"*Dummkopf!*" was what he said.

"Fool!" was what I said.

But when I had crossed the square and was striding along on the kerb of the crowded pavement, I suddenly became aware that he had followed and was now trotting abreast of me, eagerly scanning my face. I halted and sized him up. He was

dressed in a ragged sports-coat, open-neck khaki shirt, ragged trousers, wore Spanish *alpargatas*, or soft shoes, had no hat, and carried a bulky rucksack. His hair was corn-yellow and long, and his face, although dark with sunburn, was fair-complexioned.

"*Was ist das?*" I demanded. "*Was wollen Sie? Warum folgen Sie mich*—or is it *mir?*" A curse on these Teutonic niceties!"

The German vagabundo broke into a wide grin.

"You are an Englisher! I thought so! I heard you say 'fool' when you on to me trampled. Are you walking round the world, too?"

Man, it was great to hear English again after days of dog-Latin.

"Not quite," I answered. "Do you know if there are any grand hotels in this man's town?"

There were several, he said; but he believed that the three grandest were the Hotel de Inglaterra, the Hotel de Espagnol, and the Hotel de France. Accordingly, as the bloke looked as though he wanted very much to earn a tip, I told him to lead the way to the nearest place: the Hotel de Inglaterra, five minutes' walk away.

On our way there my guide told me the tale: how he was walking round the world, how broke he was, how difficult obtaining food and drink was when one had no money, and how only a crust of dry bread had passed his lips since morning. So I told him the tale, too: how I wasn't walking round the world, how I wasn't broke, how difficult obtaining food and drink was when one had money in unlimited supplies, and how, since morning, absolutely nothing had passed my lips!

That brought us to the Hotel de Inglaterra. Here, after thanking my escort for his services, I gave him a two-peseta piece and advised him to expend it on more comestibles to add to those which

## A SPANISH CINEMA

he had told the consumo at the Puente Mayor he hadn't got. Then I left him and entered the hotel.

But the hotel was full up. Not a room was to be had. The porter, however, gave me directions for finding another hotel—the Hotel de Espagnol—and there I betook myself, only to find that it, too, had its full complement of guests. So, sallying forth again, I sought and finally found in the Calle de Teresa Gil an hotel that could and would put me up—the Grand Hotel de France.

As it was still early in the evening, and as dinner wouldn't be served till heaven knew when, I cleaned myself up and went out to a picture show.

Never having been in a Spanish cinema before, the experience proved interesting if somewhat exasperating.

The cinema was called the Teatro Zorrilla. Seeing the box-office open I went forward, and, on planking down a peseta, received in return a ticket bearing the inscription: *Butaca. Fila 13, No. 4*, which signified that my seat was the fourth in the thirteenth row of the stalls. Picture my disappointment, however, when, after wandering round the vestibule for long enough, trying to open doors that wouldn't open, an attendant came and explained that I was too early by a whole hour and a half!

This buying of one's ticket hours before a performance, I was to find, is customary in Spain. It is the same as booking one's seat, because in most places of entertainment the seats are numbered. When you are going to the bull-fight you generally have to secure your ticket a day or so before.

Well, after an hour and a half's wait in a nearby café, I tried the cinema again and got in. An usher showed me to my seat and looked surprised and peeved when I didn't tip him; for it is customary, I soon found, to tip ushers. And this exasperated

me, as did yet another thing which is customary : male members of the audience standing up in their places with their backs to the stage, surveying and being surveyed by the whole house. And when I thought to soothe my exasperation by smoking, I discovered, to my exasperation, that smoking was prohibited. But just then the lights darkened and the programme began.

Compared with the programmes we get in this country it was poor, lasting a bare couple of hours. The first picture was one of the *Our Gang* series, the talk being in English with explanatory captions in Spanish ; and, of course, a fat woman sitting behind me had to read these aloud. Then a news-reel followed, with commentary in Spanish. Then the last and main picture came on.

This was that fine Hollywood production, *The Melody of Life*, featuring Ricardo Cortez and Irene Dunne. As in the first picture the talk was in English, or American rather, with Spanish captions ; and, as often happens in this country when a film in a foreign language is being shown, the audience was restless and a trifle noisy. But the crowning exasperation came when, right in the middle of the picture, when I was beginning to enjoy it, the word *Descanso*, meaning interval, was thrown on the screen, the lights went up, and while some of the male members of the audience trooped out for a smoke, the rest stood up in their places, again to survey and be surveyed !

Every cinema show that I attended in Spain, and I attended a good many, was a repetition of the above. The programme was invariably poor : a comedy, a news-reel, sometimes an additional interest feature, then the main picture, which was always ruined by the interval. The films were generally of foreign make : French and German,

but mostly American ; and even on the few occasions when the picture was an all-Spanish talkie, it was a Hollywood production. In one of these I recall seeing Antonio Moreno. Also, early Chaplin comedies and the Mickey Mouse cartoons were to the fore ; Charlie being known to Spaniards as *Charlot*, and Mickey as *Miguel Ratoncito*. But few of the shows were well attended. The only really full house I remember was at a super-cinema in Madrid where the attraction was a German film depicting life in a nudist colony—and, oh, man, it was murder getting in !

After the show I returned to the hotel and attacked with enormous appetite the umpteen-course dinner that was being served, and which consisted of wine, bread, olives, sardines, sausage, ham, soup, an omelette, hake, a chop, stewed chicken, fried potatoes, cauliflower, spinach, lettuce salad, cheese, fruit-tart, ice-cream, apples, oranges, pears, cherries, bananas, plums, peaches, grapes, almonds, raisins, biscuits, coffee, and half a dozen toothpicks. Then I got a page-boy to guide me to the lift, I think, and providence saw me safely to my room.

All next day I spent sightseeing in Valladolid.

It is a fairly big city, bright and inconsequential, but interesting from the fact that here Columbus died, Cervantes lived, and Gil Blas served under the infamous Doctor Sangrado. True, it has old buildings, older historical associations, and a most impressive past ; but an account of these, if it didn't tire you to read, would tire me to write, so we will give them the go-by.

On the morning of the day following I left Valladolid, and my hotel bill was only 17s. 9d.

The road I took led past an army cavalry school, where I stopped to watch a batch of rookies being taught how to ride.

It was comical, almost as good as a circus. The



mounts were having the time of their lives. In distant parts of the training field riderless horses galloped wildly about, nickering with delight and evading all attempts to catch them. Those that still retained their riders reared and plunged and stubbornly resisted the rein. One steed had just pitched his man and was now running backwards dragging him along the ground by the reins in a sitting posture. And the officers in charge seemed as little capable of handling the men as the men were of handling the horses.

As I resumed my way down the long, straight, tree-lined road into the south, I told myself that I was glad to see soldiers who, in spite of their uniform, were still recognisable as human beings. For to my mind there is nothing under the sun so childish and vain, so undignified and contemptible, so mirth-provoking and at the same time so pity-compelling and disheartening, as *homo sapiens*, the so-called heir of all the ages, the alleged lord of creation, tricked out in leather straps, brass buttons, and lunatic livery, drilling in massed order, manœuvring as one man. It is mechanisation in its absurdest and most blasphemous form.

The day being cool and my feet in fine condition, I made headway rapidly. The road at first ran between fields and woods through a lowland countryside, but ere long it climbed up on to a high, breezy plain bounded east and west by the level horizon, and on the south, whither it led, by a low range of barren hills.

Where this plain commenced stood a small town ; so there, in a little *tienda*, or store, for I could find neither fonda nor posada, I dined scrappily on the most that money could buy : a glass of hot milk, half a dozen tiny sugar cakes—and the inevitable fried eggs. Then I tackled the plain.

## THE MAN FROM AMERICA

Without bend or break or turn in all its interminable perspective, the smooth white road, unfenced, and bordered in places with poplars, made direct for the distant range of low hills. On either hand, the plain stretched back unhindered to the remote skyline, islanded here and there with dark pine-groves which, in the uttermost west, merged to form a vast sea of forest. And ever and again, as I journeyed into the south, there would pass great, lumbering, mule-drawn wains, with high wooden sides but no back or front, laden with immense netfuls of what at first sight looked like coconuts, but which proved to be pine-cones; pine-cones like a man's head for bigness. And the gale that blew steadily from the west was pungent with the spice of pine.

Hereabouts I had for company a cyclist who condescendingly slackened his pace to mine and talked an awful lot of rot. He was just back from a ten years' sojourn in America, he said, and there was nothing he wasn't an authority on. I gave him a cigarette to keep his trap shut, and he half-emptied my matchbox trying to light up.

"Where you come from, 'bo?" he asked me.

"From Scotland," I told him.

"From Scotland? Ha! ha! ha! I've sure heard of that gink's country, 'bo. I sure have. Yes, sir! . . . Say, do you know that in America we call a tight-wad 'Scotch'? You bet you! 'Don't be Scotch' we say to a guy that hangs onto his roll. *Sabe*, 'bo? 'Don't be Scotch!'"

"Well," said I, "we Scotsmen may be slow in showing the colour of our money, but we are smart enough in other ways."

"How come, 'bo? How come?"

"Well, for instance, we've solved a problem that

you Americans, for all your smartness, haven't been able to solve."

"Yeah? What problem's that?"

"A problem that has exercised the world's best brains for decades. I refer to the utilisation of used safety razor blades."

"No! How do you Scotchmen utilise used safety razor blades?"

"We shave with them!"

He admitted that he hadn't heard that one before.

Four kilometres later we arrived at a cross-roads, and parted. The road I took, instead of making its way over the low range of hills which now bulked above me, turned at right angles and ran along the length of the range to the end, round which it disappeared. It reminded me of the road between Killearn and Strathblane, where it skirts the base of Dumgoyne. And perched on the bald summit of the final hill, high and lonely, a strong square tower kept watch upon the plain.

The day was no longer cool, but very warm, the sun blazing from a bright blue sky; yet walking was pleasurable, what of the aromatic gale that blew steadily from the west.

Shortly after leaving the cross-roads I passed through the village of Mojados. A small, unpleasant place this is, with dirty white houses, crooked lanes, no visible shops or inhabitants, flies buzzing about, and a strong insanitary smell. Spain is pretty badly infested with like places. Indeed, small, unpleasant villages are so common in the Peninsula that Spaniards have a special name for them. This name is *aldeorrio*, and its dictionary definition is—'small, unpleasant village'!

But if squalor is a commonplace in Spain, so also is picturesqueness. Colourful sights so closely follow on the heels of eyesores that the traveller learns to

## A COLOURFUL CAVALCADE

forgive much and forget a lot. And so it was on the road beyond Mojados. Hardly had I won clear of that small, unpleasant village than I encountered something that amply and right royally made amends.

It was a cavalcade: a cavalcade straight out of the realms of romance, which we in this country associate only with the distant picturesque past—with cloak-and-sword tales and costume dramas—but never with the prosaic present.

With delighted eyes I watched it approach and pass, my mind full of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. For the train consisted of between thirty and forty gaily caparisoned mules and burros of unusual size, half of whom were pack animals heavily laden with bales and panniers, while the other half were ridden by wild, gypsy-looking banditti, some in broad-brimmed sombreros, some with their brows bound in a bandana, like buccaneers, and nearly all with a broad scarlet sash round their waist. Pistols and carbines and cutlasses, though, were not in evidence. And these picturesque riders sat their long-eared mounts in every posture of devil-may-careness, comfortable and perfectly at home, their supple bodies jig-jogging with the motion of their beasts. While most rode astride, a cigarette aglow between their unshaven lips, a few sat sideways eating food, and one, who was drinking from a leathern wine bottle tilted heavenward, sat backside-foremost. And the backs and quarters of the mules and burros, I noticed, were close-cropped and shaved, the bordering hair being clipped in imitation of Moorish basket work.

“Who are these, *hijo mío*?” I asked of a little shepherd boy who stood near: himself a character out of a fairy tale, for his brown face was shaded by an enormous floppy hat, his coat was a shaggy

sheepskin, his hose were cross-gartered, and by his side hung a sheepskin pouch: "What men are these?"

"Arrieros, *señor*," he told me. "Maragatos."

Maragatos! The hereditary arrieros—carriers—of Castile. Of course! I had read the account of them in Borrow. A strange people, clannish as Jews or gypsies, with their own peculiar customs and observances, never marrying out of their race, they lived exclusively, I recalled, in La Maragatería, or country of the Maragatos, in Leon, with Astorga as their capital; and while some authorities assert that they are descendants of the Moors, and others affirm that their forebears were the Goths, the popular view is that they are a blend of both, and that their name signifies Moorish-Goths. Anyway, the Maragatos are a nation of arrieros (which word derives from the "*Arre!*" which they use to gee-up their beasts) who, leaving their womenfolk at home to labour in the fields, travel far and wide in the exercise of their calling, undisputed lords of the highway, making picturesque the roads with their mule trains and donkey caravans.

Henceforward the road ran high along the skirts of the hill-range aforementioned, and the view was exhilaratingly wide and panoramic. Its boundless spaciousness made one's chest expand in sympathy and one's arms lift in an involuntary embrace. In a leisurely tilt, leagues upon leagues in extent, the plain fell away westward like a vast shore to meet the dark tide of forest flooding the horizon. And the wind that blew in from that piney ocean was redolent of all that is pitchy and resinous, biting and stinging the nostrils with its aromatic pungency ere it made the lungs to prickle and glow with its tonic balm.

Gradually the final hill with its lonely watch-tower,

## FIRST SIGHT OF THE GUADARRAMAS

whither I was now heading, drew nearer and nearer, met me, fell behind, and I turned with the road round its base into the south.

Past open pine-groves I went, taking in my stride a sunken valley and a shining river. Then before the sun set I caught a magic glimpse in the ultimate south of a low, horizon-long line of snow-capped mountain peaks, dream alps, dim and wraith-like, extending east and west, which I knew to be the dividing range of the two Castiles: the barrier wall of the Sierra de Guadarrama. Then darkness descended, the stars came out, the cicadas took up their song, and I was speeding over the lonely road with the twinkling lights of Olmedo as my goal.

An hour's hard walking brought me under the old crumbling walls of this little place, the scene of bloody battles long ago, where, as related by Le Sage, Gil Blas attended the wedding of a certain journeyman barber's sister; and as I entered through its picturesque south gate in company with woodcutters and their faggot-laden burros, I felt like the hero of some mediæval romance. For the atmosphere of these walled towns and cities of Spain is definitely that of the Middle Ages.

Along dark and silent alleys I picked my way until the sound of children's voices guided me to the Plaza, where the townsfolk crowded the piazzas or sat drinking and gossiping at café tables. And here there was a tiny hotel into which I was readily admitted and made to feel immediately at home.

The mother and her three daughters who kept the place couldn't have fussed over me more had I been one of the family. After a wash and brush-up in a spotless, perfectly appointed bedroom I came down and sat solitary at a table in the little dining-room. But they wouldn't hear of that at all, at all—*no, señor!* I must come and join them in the kitchen,

it was cheerier there. And the mother, who was cooking ham, proffered me a piece on the point of the ham-knife, bidding me taste. *Bueno? Bueno, señora!* Then the eldest daughter, on my failing to understand something she said, tried sign-language, and her antics were so comic that everybody, including herself, burst out laughing. Then, my cigarettes having run done, I asked where I could get more, whereon the youngest and prettiest daughter, a born coquette, said she would show me herself, so we went forth arm-in-arm into the busy Plaza, whence the señorita took the longest way round to the tobacconist's, in order to flaunt me, her newest acquisition, in the faces of as many girl friends as possible.

On returning to the hotel I was served with supper, consisting of thick soup, a large plateful of ham and eggs and green peas (!), lamb chops with fried potatoes, cheese, cakes, and a bottle of wine. And as I was finishing up with coffee and a cigarette, the son of the house came in.

He was a sallow, thoughtful youth, with smouldering eyes and long hair, and at first he hadn't much to say. But on my producing my passport to show to one of the girls, the sight of the gilt crown on the cover roused him. His eyes caught fire and a bright flush mantled his sallow cheeks.

"You are for the Republic, *señor?*" he demanded.

"With all my heart," I replied; for by his looks I judged him to be a Socialist, probably an Anarchist.

"Bah!" was his unexpected answer to that, though, and I saw I had blundered. He was a Monarchist!

Keeping countenance, nevertheless, I reached for my hat, showed him the gilt crown decorating the lining, and, as I had done before in the posada at Becilla, donned and doffed it two or three times, the while repeating, in a tone of voice that left no

“ I, TOO, AM A POET ”

shadow of doubt as to my real meaning : “ *Viva la República !* ”

He almost embraced me.

“ You are right, *señor*. *Viva la República*, indeed ! And long life to Azaña, eh ? Ha ! ha ! ha ! . . . What is your profession, *señor* ? ”

I confessed that I wrote, and that I had been guilty of authorship on two occasions.

This excited him.

“ An author ! You have written books ! You—you have written poems, too, maybe—no ? ”

I confessed to having committed poetry also.

That did it.

“ Wait ! ” cried the bloke, and taking the stairs two at a time he flew up to his room and was back almost immediately with a bulky, well-thumbed exercise book, which he thrust into my hands.

“ Read, *señor* ! ” he commanded. “ For I, too, can write. I, too, am a poet. Read ! ”

Opening the book, I began to read, and quickly found that his was no empty boast. He could certainly write. His poems, in number about a score, bore the mark of the practised hand. While those at the beginning were mostly laments inspired by Don Alfonso's flight and exile, the rest were lampoons directed against the Azaña Government. And what lampoons ! They probed to the quick of things Republican, biting to the bone, laying open the flesh, rubbing in salt. They were fiery arrows of derision dipped in the poison of hate and released by the hand of wrath from the bow of despair. And while I read, the poet, pale and trembling with suppressed emotion, one hand uplifted to command silence and attention from his mother and sisters, gazed fiercely and earnestly into my face, his features changing with every change in mine, absolutely beside himself.



"Bravo!" was all I could say when I had finished reading the last poem, a bitter personal attack on Señor Azaña himself, provoked by the dreadful Casas Viejas affair; "Bravo!"

The poet flushed with pleasure and bowed his thanks, too moved for words.

Shorty afterwards I bade everyone goodnight and retired. But I had been in my room only a few moments when the poet knocked and entered, and, with the air of a conspirator, carefully closed the door and drew together the window curtains.

"Señor," he whispered, beckoning me under the glow of the electric light, "come here and watch."

Wondering what the game was, I obeyed. First producing a packet of cigarette papers and tearing off one, he took a pencil and began to write. But, instead of writing from left to right, which is usual, he wrote backwards from right to left, which is unusual; and instead of forming letters and words, he formed figures and hieroglyphics.

"Loyalty to royalty," I told myself, "has turned this joker's napper. He's off his chump. He'll be cutting out paper dolls next, the looney."

At that, however, the poet finished his cryptic scrawl, and holding the thin transparent cigarette paper against the light, showed what he had written. It was this:—

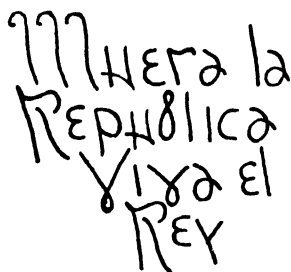
Y3 13 6818 6734 6734 6734

## CRYPTIC SCRAWL

It was beyond me. I could make neither head nor tail of it. And not knowing whether I was supposed to laugh or cry or show enthusiasm or register regret, I sang dumb, shaking my head in acknowledgment of defeat, while the potty poet chuckled at my mystification.

"You cannot read it, *señor*, eh?" he teased. "It completely baffles you, yes? You think it does not make sense, no? Ha! ha! ha! Well, watch closely, *señor*. Watch closely and I shall show you how wrong you are. It is so simple—when one knows the secret. *Now read!*"

With a dramatic flourish he suddenly turned the cigarette paper round so that the writing showed in reverse through the transparent tissue, and behold! what had been a meaningless succession of figures and hieroglyphics became on the instant as plain as A B C. It was the treasonous slogan:—



Muera la  
Republica  
Viva el  
REY

*"Muera la Republica. Viva el Rey."*

"Death to the Republic! Long live the King!"

And having shot his bolt, the poet, his eyes afire and his cheeks aflame, made a triumphant, and accidentally spectacular, exit. For, missing his step on the dark stairs outside, he pitched headlong

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

down the entire flight to the bottom, landing with a thud that jarred the house to its foundations. But, if he broke anything, it wasn't his neck. That was too stiff with pride and patriotism and fealty and loyalty for anything under high heaven to break !

## LAP THE EIGHTH

### SOUTH TO SEGOVIA

Churros—Death on the road—The whereabouts of Segovia—  
In the foothills—Sunset on the Sierra—Santa Maria de Nieva  
—Spanish money—Segovia in sight—A skyful of—mothballs!  
—The Alcazar—Trajan's Aqueduct—Touristitis—A walking  
funeral—Departure from Segovia.

FOR breakfast next morning, instead of being given a roll with my coffee-and-milk, I was given a *churro*.

These churros, or fritters, are a delicacy beloved by Spaniards. At street corners and in market places in the early morning, women frying churros are a familiar sight. They use a thing like an overgrown syringe or an outsize in bicycle pumps, charged with prepared batter. Holding and guiding the nozzle of this with both hands, and depressing the piston with their shoulder, they squeeze out the stuff into a large round pan half-full of bubbling fat. And as a circular motion is employed, and as the batter comes out like paint from a tube, the result is large spiral coils of crisp brown crunchiness not unlike fried coils of garden hose, which, after being broken into short lengths, are sold piping hot at so many pieces a penny. You see folk going about the markets eating their churros from a scrap of newspaper, like chip potatoes, or sitting at café tables dipping them in coffee and noisefully sucking them.

Paying my bill, which came to three-and-sixpence, and taking leave of everybody, including the poet,

who was quite recovered from his fall the night before, I rapidly extricated myself from Olmedo, and resumed the road.

Over the shadeless landscape under a brilliant sun I padded through the dust, sweating freely in the suffocating heat and parched by that abiding thirst which is ever the traveller's lot on Spanish roads. The highway dipped and rose monotonously on its way across the plain, which in the far south billowed into foothills, which in turn swelled and soared loftily to form the snow-peaked divide of the Guadarramas.

Occasionally old peasant women dressed in black, with umbrellas shading them from the sun, would pass on donkeys. But these, with the rare motor-cars that zoomed past at long intervals, constituted the only traffic. As always, I was the sole pedestrian : alone on the road except for the darting lizards, the scurrying black ants, and the bloody carcasses of snakes. For infrequent though motors are on Spanish roads, they take fearful toll of life ; not human life, however, but animal and insect life. Innumerable were the great bloody messes I encountered on the roads. Never a day, hardly a league passed, but I would come upon the almost unrecognisable remains of some creature that had been crushed and pulped beneath the Juggernaut wheels of progress. Now it would be a frog or a rabbit, again a dog, a lizard, or a snake. Sometimes the lizards were females who had been carrying eggs, and these would be scattered over the roadway like so many jelly beans. Or often the victims would be great grasshopper-like insects of whose carcasses live members of the same species were making a cannibal feast, fighting like tigers over the choicer portions. But the mangled and cut-up bodies of snakes predominated. So very numerous were

## THE WHEREABOUTS OF SEGOVIA

they, indeed, that it looked as if some latter-day St. Patrick were touring the Peninsula bent on their total extermination.

Some distance beyond Olmedo I arrived at a cross-roads where no signposts were. Rolling a cigarette, I sat down to await the advent of a passer-by whom I could question. And all about me fields of green corn rustled and rippled, falling away westward to meet the sea of pines darkening the horizon. And the heat hummed with insect life, and invisible larks hung warbling in the blue.

Before long a field labourer driving two bullocks appeared, and on my hailing him and asking which of the roads led to Segovia, he told me that none of them did, but that if I held straight on for a kilometre or so I should come to where a cart-track branched off on the left, and if I followed this for a day or so it would bring me out on the main road, which I must then follow south for another day or so towards the sierra, at whose foot, at an altitude of more than 3000 feet above sea-level, I should find the city I sought. He also informed me that, although only a few yards separated the two of us, we each stood in a different province. He was in the province of Valladolid and I in that of Segovia, the border-line lying invisible between us.

Throwing my cigarette away only half-smoked, for the parched state of my mouth made smoking anything but pleasant, I rose and pushed on through the arid heat, eventually reaching the cart-track, down which I turned.

In a long, slow slant the dusty white ribbon of it ascended between wide rolling downlands to a breezy crest, whence could be seen, in a dip far below, a chapel tower rising from clustered dwellings.

It took me until midday to reach the little place, nevertheless, for the clear air acted as a telescope

lens, bringing distant objects nearer and magnifying details in a manner most deceiving.

A posada sign above the entrance to a long, stone-flagged kitchen sort of place greeted my eye immediately on arrival. I entered, and the posadero, who was also the village *sastre*, or tailor, left his Singer sewing machine to attend to me; and in due course I was served with fried eggs, fried meat, terrifically strong sausages, bread, and a bowl of warm milk, for which meal I paid the equivalent of one-and-fourpence. Then, fortifying myself with a lengthy drink from a water-jar, I plunged from the cool dark of the kitchen into the burning blaze of day, and continued along the cart-track.

Over the verdant backs of the ever-heightening foothills I toiled in the heat, the snowy summits of the Guadarramas heliographing back the sunlight and dancing mirage-like in the super-heated air. And at each of the three little townships which I encountered on the way I was forced to stop and imbibe neckful after neckful of the vital liquid to make good the loss of moisture drawn out of me by the arid atmosphere.

After switchbacking its full the track left the shadeless heights to descend by zigzags into the gloom of timber bordering a sunken river, the Volloya, over which it then proceeded to cross on a high bridge, and so rose by loops and bends to lofty highlands dense with forests of pine.

Here walking was a joy. Here cool breezes played, spicy with woodland aromas. Here golden-flowered underwoods bedecked the groves and vistas, and bees hummed, and butterflies abounded. Here, too, as I passed along the avenue of the trackway, footing with delight the needle-strewn verges, I observed that every pine—and there were thousands of pines—had had incisions made in its trunk similar

## SUNSET ON THE SIERRA

to those which are made in rubber trees ; and from these raw wounds the resinous gum oozed and dripped into underhanging earthenware pots, which men were busy collecting.

Through time I won clear of this forest belt, coming in the evening to a dusty little village near where ran the railway. But I did not halt. I held on through the place, my goal being the town of Santa Maria de Nieva, some two leagues beyond.

Desolate wastes of sand now bordered the track, with here and there dark clumps of pines growing out of them. These pines, by the way, with the others I had seen that day, were not nearly so picturesque as our Scottish pines, being all of them umbrella-topped like those comical vegetable growths with which Turner desecrated a lot of his landscapes. Massed as they were, however, they gave to the scene that romantic touch which pines always give.

It was very silent and lonely, and the sun was sinking fast. The distant snows of the sierra, high in front against a sky of brilliant blue, flushed rose-red, or flamed with crimson fire, or purpled in deepest gloom, as the last rays swept them. But behind—behind, when I chanced to turn, all was as dark as a cave, and thunder rumbled, and a hot wind blew, and great raindrops splashed into the sand. Then the sun set, all light vanished, and I was abroad in the black night with a league still to go to Santa Maria de Nieva.

Onward I hurried, now between tall timber, now between sandy tracts, and at the end of the second kilometre I saw lights twinkling low down to the right of the road. Was that——? No, it was only Nieva, a melancholy village of hovels. Then where——? Ah! Lifting my eyes I saw other twinkling lights far above on the crest of the hill at whose foot I was arrived at—the lights of Santa



Maria de Nieva—and a toilsome kilometre more and I was home.

My guardian angel guided me to a venta just off the Plaza, where the ventero assured me that he could accommodate me for the night. He likewise assured me that I could have anything in the food line I fancied—so I was forced to sup off fried eggs, fried meat, bread, hot milk, and oranges, which was all he had. I could have had *beano*, too, in abundance, had I wished, but I contented myself with watching it, and *aguardiente*, being drunk by the crowd of labouring-looking loafers at the bar.

Until the place closed for the night I was kept busy answering questions concerning the countries I had passed through. For, as usual, the people mistook me for a German walking round the world. Then when everybody was gone, my host and I sat late over a cask of nuts, conversing by means of paper and pencil.

You see, earlier in the evening he had said something which I hadn't understood, whereon I had asked him to write it down, which he did, and I immediately understood, and, in turn, replied in writing. And the ventero had been hugely amused by this novel means of conversing. So there we sat like a couple of chess players, solemnly thinking out something to say, solemnly writing it down, solemnly passing it to be read, then bursting into laughter as the sense went home. It was a proper game. And if I had not called a halt when midnight struck, I do believe I should be sitting there yet.

Next morning I took the road, poorer by 6 pesetas 50 centimos.

Although this was only three shillings and three-pence in English money, and very reasonable for a night's board and lodging, still I left the venta feeling that I had been grossly overcharged.

## SPANISH MONEY

I could account for this, however. It meant that my viewpoint had changed—that I had ceased to think of Spanish money in terms of English money, and was now come to look upon it as a Spaniard does. In other words, I now valued the peseta—the Spanish shilling, if you can imagine a shilling made up of tenpence instead of twelpence—as a peseta, and not as a foreign coin with an exchange value fluctuating around sixpence. Hence, instead of mentally halving that 6 pesetas 50 centimos to get its English equivalent of three-and-thruppence, I regarded it *á la Española* : that is, as six shillings and sixpence, which, in Spain, where money is tight, is pretty steep for a night's board and lodging.

Spanish money, let me interrupt, is easy to get the hang of. In size the coins approximate to our own. First comes the 5-centimo piece, a copper similar to our ha'penny ; then the 10-centimo piece, like our penny ; next the real, of nickel, worth 25 centimos, equivalent to our threepenny bit ; then the 50-centimo piece, a silver coin like a sixpence ; followed by the peseta, the monetary unit, worth 100 centimos, also of silver, about the size of a shilling ; then the 2-peseta piece, of silver likewise, about as big as a florin ; and lastly, the daddy of them all, the 5-peseta piece, a silver coin every bit as large and thick and heavy, if not more so, than an English crown-piece, a pocketful of which makes you feel like a walking silver mine. And the bank-notes, unlike the rubbishy notes of France, are for sensible amounts, handy in size, wear well, and are designed in a manner pleasing and interesting.

When shopping in Spain, you have always to watch your change, as a lot of spurious money is in circulation, especially 5-peseta pieces ; and when you pay a shopkeeper he nearly always subjects your money to a close scrutiny, sometimes, as I have

shown, boldly ringing it on a stone slab kept for that purpose.

From Santa Maria de Nieva I fared southward, the road running straight ahead in an ascent, fifteen miles long, to Segovia, whose Alcazar tower, perched as it is on a rock amid the foothills of the Guadarramas at an altitude of more than 3000 feet, was conspicuous most of the way.

The morning was at first sunny and warm, and a bracing wind blew from the mountains. In the fields ploughmen urged their teams, and shepherds with whips drove flocks to pasture. At one place the road zigzagged down to ford a sunken river that wound through a wood where great hares capered and leapt, then zigzagged back again to the heights. But in that short time the weather changed, and thereafter the sky was overcast, the sierran alps sulked behind mist, and rain threatened.

Onward and ever upward I laboured through the thundergloom, Segovia's citadel always in sight. Once a solitary shaft of sunlight fell athwart it on its rock afar, so that it shone and scintillated like a holy symbol, like a haloed Calvary, like the golden portal to a celestial city—

“ . . . a city inaccessible,  
Where the dead dreamers dwell.”

About midday a little village showed itself at some distance from the road, so I turned aside and had dinner at a posada there—if you can call fried eggs, bread, and beano, dinner. Meagre as it was, though, the preparing of it occasioned considerable excitement among the numerous members of the household. Heaven knows why. The posadero, his wife, his sons and daughters, and *their* sons and daughters, his grandparents, and what must have

## A SKYFUL OF—MOTHBALLS!

been his great-grandparents, besides the usual hangers-on, all trafficked ceaselessly between the kitchen, where the cursed eggs were frying, and the yardway, where I sat in solitary state. Their attentions positively embarrassed me. And during the meal, two big silent ploughmen had to stand guard at the doorway, which was crowded with villagers, young and old, watching my every movement and discussing me as though I were a visitor from another planet. And when I paid the reckoning—tenpence!—and was returning to the main road, little imps of boys followed at a distance and kept pelting me with gravel and pebbles and portions of donkey dung.

Back on the highway I walked along until I came to a leafy dell through which a stream, the Eresma, flowed. Here I rested and washed myself clean, and went on again. But I hadn't gone far when, with breath-taking suddenness, the heavens opened and let down a skyful of—mothballs! I repeat, mothballs. In size and shape and colour they were identical with mothballs; but on taking one in my hand and examining it, I found it to be not a mothball but a hailstone, the biggest hailstone I have ever seen. The clattering din they made, too, as they struck the ground and rebounded and ricocheted and rolled and clinked together, was—well, you can imagine. And had they been the least bit heavier, or shaped otherwise than perfectly round, they would assuredly have done me hurt. As it was, they caused a passing donkey to throw its rider and stampede for shelter.

Finally, in the late afternoon, I arrived under Segovia.

Picture it. Picture a castle out of a fairy tale, a veritable *Chateau en Espagne*, towered and turreted and spired, crowning a lofty crag that drops pre-

cipitously to a watersmeet far below, where are gardens with peacocks, and trees that soar and taper to the towers. That's the Alcazar—the castle fortress. And picture behind it a domed cathedral, and behind that again, enclosed within picturesque walls with round towers, packing the crest of the long crag in a clustered mass, a city of quaint old stately houses and churches and convents and squalid hovels, and narrow, tortuous streets and cobbled alleys. Picture—picture a Spanish Edinburgh! That's Segovia.

There by the watersmeet below the Alcazar, where the two streams, Eresma and Clamores, join and mingle, imparting to the lofty crag the semblance of a ship cleaving the wave, I stood long in contemplation. For it was a rare sight and a rarer experience: like viewing, in the concrete, a fabric of dreams. And as I stood I thought—

“ There is my lost Abana,  
And there is my nameless Pharphar  
That mixed with my heart  
When I was a boy,  
And time stood still.”

Through an ornamental gateway worn with age I passed, and began the long ascent round under the wooded slopes and frowning fortress walls of the town-topped hill to the place of access at the back end. And on rounding the last steep turn, lo! a mighty thing confronted me.

It was a colossal bridge of stone. Or rather, it was two colossal bridges of stone, one built on top of the other; a cyclopean work of arches upon arches; a titanic structure of huge, rough-hewn, weather-rounded granite blocks, towering to mid-heaven and straddling the valley. It was, in short, Trajan's Aqueduct.

## TRAJAN'S AQUEDUCT

For upwards of eighteen hundred years it has stood there, solid and strong, time-defying, seemingly indestructible, relic and reminder of Roman might. Nor does it just stand, and nothing more. It is still, as it has always been, an aqueduct. Along the top of its upper tier of arches, over a hundred feet in air, the waters of a hill stream ten miles distant are still conducted, supplying Segovia.

Though unquestionably a Roman work, built, authorities suppose, in the time of the Emperor Trajan, yet legend has it that it was built by the Hoofed One at the instigation of a fair Segoviana, who promised to be his if he completed it in one night; which Old Nick managed miraculously to do, except for one stone which was wanting, so he had his Herculean labour for nothing: hence the Aqueduct's local name of *El Puente del Diablo*, The Devil's Bridge.

High as it is, and long—being 102 feet in height where the valley is deepest, and running in a series of bends a distance of over 2500 feet—in width it is very narrow, giving one the feeling that the least puff of wind would cause the entire façade to topple. But its builders were builders, and it is proof even against hurricanes, despite the almost unbelievable fact of the enormous granite blocks composing it being merely held in place by their own weight and not by mortar or cement or binding material of any kind!

Such is Trajan's Aqueduct, beneath whose 107th arch, you may remember, Borrow once sat the greater part of a day, waiting for one who did not come.

Immediately below the Aqueduct is the entrance square of the city, the Plaza de Azoquejo, whence the long narrow high street climbs steeply to the main square of Segovia, the Plaza Mayor.

Up this street I now toiled, the rain descending in a dreary drizzle, and I could scarcely get walking for the lounging soldier boys cluttering the way. Then at last, coming out upon the Plaza Mayor, on a corner of which stands the Cathedral, I halted and stood looking about me, wondering where the hotels were. And as I stood I was suddenly attacked by three tiny brown-faced urchins dressed in tight-fitting uniforms with brass buttons, who caught rude hold of me and tried to fight each other off while crying: "The caballero is mine! I saw him first!"

"*Anda!*" I replied to that, shaking them from me. Then lifting the tiniest one up on a level with my face, I gazed deep into his eyes.

"*Hotel?*" I demanded.

"*Si, señor,*" he quavered.

"*Hotel con todo confort—no?*"

"*Hotel con todo confort—si!*"

"*Gran hotel?*"

"*Gran hotel, señor. El Gran Hotel Comercio Europeo!*"

"El Gran Hotel Comercio Europeo wins," said I, putting the little page down. "Lead on—Goliath!"

Lead on he did, manfully staggering ahead under my heavy pack, which he insisted on carrying. . . . And for that night, and the next two days and nights, you must picture me putting up at El Gran Hotel Comercio Europeo and El Gran Hotel Comercio Europeo putting up with me.

During my stay I explored Segovia thoroughly. Whether it was because the place was infested with tourists, I don't know, anyway I managed to contract touristitis, being pretty ill with that pernicious malady the greater part of the time. And in the delirium brought on by its fell pangs I visited the

## A WALKING FUNERAL

old 16th-century Cathedral, one of the finest Gothic examples in the Peninsula, which is built of a wonderful yellow stone that glows like gold in the sunlight ; and the Alcazar, as rich as Edinburgh Castle in historical associations, wherein our King Charles I. once lodged, and Señor Gil Blas once languished ; and the Casa de Moneda, formerly the mint for all Spain ; and the Casa de los Picos, a house with its entire front decorated with regular rows of projecting stones cut diamond shape ; and the Calvario, or Mount of Calvary, a hill across the valley from Segovia, where tall crosses stand and priests pace at twilight ; and churches and convents and gateways, etc. ; and, of course, the Aqueduct.

Between whiles, when not sitting sipping coffee in the café-bar of Juan Bravo in the Plaza Mayor or wandering down some endless alley under the high blank house walls with their tiny windows and enormous doorways, I used to haunt the terrace-promenade of the Paseo del Salon, revelling in the magnificent prospect which the Sierra de Guadarrama presented lording it across the valley.

Often, too, I would hang about the Plaza de Azoquejo, where the city's loungers mostly congregate. And here I once witnessed a most solemn sight.

It was a walking funeral. First, drawn by four prancing steeds with sable head-plumes nodding aloft, came the hearse, a vehicle similar to those in this country, not glass - panelled, but open, with much gilt scrollwork, and surmounted at the corners by winged hour-glasses. And on either side of it walked three men bearing lighted candles nearly as tall as themselves. Then immediately following the hearse came a priest in black robes and beaver hat, and after him the melancholy procession of mourners. It was most impressive. And the loungers in the Plaza all stood bare-headed



and silent as the cortège passed slowly under the arch of the great Aqueduct to begin its long winding ascent to the cemetery on the hill, whose tile-topped wall and dark cypress trees could be seen against the sky. And I heard a Guardia Civil who was standing beside me, mutter to himself: "*Dios mío, qué solos se quedan los muertos!*"—"My God, how lonely the dead are!"

On the morning of the third day, Monday, I regretfully took leave of Segovia, starting early as I wanted to make the town of Villalba that same night. For although Villalba lies only a matter of some twenty-five or so miles further along the road, yet between it and Segovia a considerable protuberance intervenes. I mean the Sierra de Guadarrama.

## LAP THE NINTH

### CLIMBING THE GUADARRAMAS

Out of Segovia—Warning notice—Diddled and done—At San Ildefonso—La Granja—Alpine district—Balsain—Up, up, up—Las Siete Vueltas—The summit vista—Old and New Castile—Descending the divide—A darksome desert—Las Batuecas

THE road out of Segovia runs in the shadow of El Puente across the valley, bending as the aqueduct bends and climbing the hill in its company. And the higher the road climbs the lower become the arches, until they disappear altogether and you can sit astride the conduit with your feet only a few inches off the ground.

Up the long ascent I toiled, past the Bull Ring and the shack of the consumos, to where the road branched and a notice informed travellers that the road over the Guadarramas by way of La Granja and the Pass of Navacerrada was impassable, being blocked with snow. So I took that road.

At the top of the hill it bent, and thereafter ran for a considerable way, long and straight and slightly descending, direct for the mountain wall, which bulked high and near and blacked out the daylight.

Half-way down this stretch I rested in the shade of a tree for a smoke and to study the bill of El Gran Hotel Comercio Europeo; and imagine my feelings on discovering that the beautiful young señorita who had made it out had diddled me to the tune of 10 pesetas!

The charge for the two days and three nights I had stayed in that hotel was 50.25 pesetas, plus 5 pesetas (10%) for service, and one peseta for the Beneficence stamp, or rather half-stamp, which they always stick on your bill, making a total of 56.25 pesetas. But whether it was because I was a foreigner, or because she didn't know her cyphers, the señorita had added these amounts together and got a total of 66.25 pesetas, thus doing me in to the extent of the above-mentioned sum.

I fumed. I blamed myself for not taking time to add the thing up properly before paying. But the Spanish trick of writing a 1 as though it were a 7, coupled with the angelic air and the scented tresses and the lovely face and beautiful eyes and betwitching lips of the señorita, had sort of—well, it had put me off. Blast it! Returning to Segovia, too, was out of the question. I contented myself, therefore, with writing in my diary: "N.B.—In future, before paying a bill, add it up. If the bill has been made out by a beautiful young señorita—keep on adding it up!"

About an hour before noon the road brought me into the village of San Ildefonso, where, to fortify myself against the climb before me, I put myself outside a six-course meal inside one of the hotels there. And the fish course, I remember, was a trout served whole, eyes and all, gripping its tail between its jaws: a descendant, probably, of one of those "certain trouts of extraordinary greatness" on which our King Charles I. supped when he lodged in the Alcazar of Segovia on the night of Wednesday, September the 13th, 1623.

At San Ildefonso is the Spanish Balmoral: La Granja, the summer palace of the kings of Spain.

It seems that Philip V., while hunting hereabouts in the year 1720, took a fancy to the site on which

## LA GRANJA

the monks of El Parral, in Segovia, had their farmhouse, or grange (hence the name, La Granja), and, buying it from them, he emulated Kubla Khan in Xanadu, for there he did a stately pleasure-dome decree, causing to be built at enormous cost a highly ornate chateau, and gardens laid out after the manner of those at Versailles, with statues of Greek gods, and numerous fountains, and everything, which make La Granja one of the show places of Spain. And there Philip died ; and he was buried there, too, instead of in that sombre mausoleum of departed Spanish monarchy, the Escorial. And to-day La Granja stands, a haunted palace, where,

“ . . . about the throne, the glory  
That blushed and bloomed,  
Is but a dim-remembered story  
Of the old time entombed.”

All this district is so elevated as to be genuinely alpine. From San Ildefonso, which stands at an altitude of nearly 4000 feet on the slopes of the Guadarramas, the road climbs for about 3000 feet more ere it attains the summit of the pass, El Puerto de Navacerrada, 7000 feet up ; and the highest mountain in the neighbourhood is La Peñalara, towering behind La Granja to between 8000 and 9000 feet. So you can guess with what delight, on issuing fortified from the hotel, I began the long, tortuous ascent.

The weather was perfect. Blue skies, white clouds, and golden sunshine prevailed. The sierran air, cold and keen, was tangy with the pitch of pine. It was a day to be alive on.

Shortly after leaving San Ildefonso I passed through the village of Balsain, where the houses are half-timbered, and then the climb began. And until I reached the summit of the pass I continued

to meet long, straggling trains of donkeys and mules and ponies heavily burdened with faggots, attended by woodcutters clad in picturesque costumes.

Up and up toiled the winding road through the royal pine forest, El Pinar Grande del Rey, where were waterfalls and bluebells and butterflies and warbling song-birds. All around, when I could see, I saw mighty hills wooded to the peak, and vast valleys filled with sunlight, and rushing torrents and foaming cataracts. And always the exalted heights, the ultimate alps, the dazzling snow-capped crests and pinnacles of the sierra, like a frieze along the sky, dominated the scene.

Sweating at every pore I steadily mounted up, up, up, piling kilometre upon kilometre. Then the ascent became so steep that the road could only advance by looping and counter-looping, shuttle-wise, with perilous hairpin bends steeply banked as on a speed-track, across the precipitous face of the pine-clad mountainside; hence the reason for this section of the climb being called *Las Siete Vueltas*, or *The Seven Turns*. And the view, as terrace succeeded terrace, grew increasingly sensational. I felt I was climbing to heaven's gate.

Then after an age of tedious exertion up ever-steepening slopes, I reached the snow-line, and with anxious eyes scanned the roadway ahead. But what I feared to see I did not see. True, as the warning notice back at the cross-roads had intimated, the road was blocked with snow, and impassable—but only for vehicles. For a distance of about 200 yards it lay buried beneath deep snow, through which a man with a snow-plough was busy clearing a path; and as the surface was frostbound and easily bore my weight, I set foot on the dazzling stretch without much fear.

Round the dizzy rim of a profound glen this

## THE SUMMIT VISTA

snow-covered stretch led to the summit of the pass. On the right the snows sloped precipitously upward, and on the left sloped as precipitously down, through straggling pine and fir, down, down, down, to end only where the forest began : the forest that clothed all the glen thereafter with its green mantle, and fell away, like a verdant flood, down, down, down, mile after mile, to the far-off end, where, framed in a V-shaped notch, the golden plainlands glittered like some promised Canaan ; and these, as they receded in interminable perspective to an infinitely remote horizon, carried the sight up and up and up from the profundities, back again to eye-level.

No vaster vista have I ever looked out over.

And when eventually I attained the summit of the pass, there greeted me another vista equally as vast : the vista of a mighty pine-clad valley dropping precipitously southward, mile after mile, through green foothills out on to the levels of an immense plain extending to the horizon, along the rim of which ran a chain of mountains.

It was marvellous. Had I been a Janus, with a face at the back of my head as well as in front, I could have looked out over these twin vistas simultaneously, without moving. Nay, by standing sideways and rapidly oscillating my head right and left, I did manage to do this.

Yes, and while so doing, I likewise accomplished the difficult feat of being in two places at one and the same time. For, standing as I was astride the crest of the pass, where the province of Madrid marches with that of Segovia, I was simultaneously in Old and New Castile.

To the north, whence I had come, lay Castilla la Vieja—Old Castile.

This ancient kingdom stretches from the Sierra de Guadarrama right to the Biscayan seaboard, and is made up of eight provinces : Segovia, Avilla,

Soria, Valladolid, Palencia, Logroño, Burgos, and Santander. It has been known as Castile since the beginning of the 9th century, being so called from the great number of its castles (*castillos*) and walled forts. Its Moorish name signified Land of Castles. And the Old was prefixed to it to distinguish it from that country on the other side of the Guadarramas which was wrested from the Moors at a later date: Castilla la Nueva, or New Castile, that extends south as far as the borders of Andalusia, and includes the provinces of Guadalajara, Madrid, Toledo, Ciudad Real, and Cuenca.

Combined, the two Castiles take up nearly the whole of Central Spain, or about one-third of the entire realm. The land they occupy is a vast plateau, lying between 2000 and 3000 feet above sea-level, whose northern and southern escarpments are the Cantabrian Mountains and the Sierra de Guadarrama respectively. The three great rivers of Spain—Gadiana, Douro, Tagus—water them. In them are to be found some of the oldest, most renowned, and most typical Spanish cities. The language of their people is the official language for the whole country. To be Castilian-born is to be as proud as Lucifer, and to hold all outlanders as mere mongrel accidents.

With a last look back at the far-off golden plainlands, I turned and began the descent of the divide. Past the Restaurant de los Dos Castillas and the chalet of the Spanish Alpine Club I dropped down, down, down at a great rate, on a broad steep highway that cleft a headlong path through tall pine forests, following the valley to where it opened out among foothills on to the plain below.

As this valley fell away from the snows and the forests finished, the road wandered round open hillsides under dark granite hills whose serrated tops

were as wild and fantastic as those of the Black Coolins in Skye. And the view was magnificent. It embraced the entire terrain from the mountains rimming the horizon to the red-roofed townships nestling where the green waves of the plain lapped the base of the sierra. In the crystal-clear air, too, the most distant objects were as distinctly visible as those close at hand; while the declining sun, blazing from a sky of unclouded blue, flooded the landscape with mellow gold.

Ever downward I sped along the superbly surfaced highway, the scene growing bleaker and more desolate, until I was traversing a darksome desert of boulder and heath, on the edge of which, behind low purple hills, in rose-red and saffron fire, the sun soon set.

In the midst of this solitary region, while the west paled and a cold moon and stars came out, and the cicadas sang, I halted by the eighth kilometre-stone from Villalba and rolled a cigarette and sat smoking.

And as I sat I lifted my eyes to the moonlit Guadarramas high behind, and in thought travelled along them westward for a hundred miles and more to where, in Salamanca on the borders of Portugal, they bear another name, being known as the Sierra de Peña de Francia. And it was there, I recalled, amid the fastnesses of the Sierra de Peña de Francia, deep in their wild heart, that long, long ago men of the mountains who had lost their way in the demon-haunted altitudes, came by chance upon Las Batuecas: two valleys, so deep and narrow that even during the longest days the sun is visible only three or four hours, wherein were living a nation unknown and undreamt of till then by the outer world, who spoke a strange tongue, and who had dwelt there, a race apart, for ages, unaware that the earth held people besides themselves!



## LAP THE TENTH

### INTO NEW CASTILE

Wolves—The Escorial—In Villalba—" *Jesús !* "—A case of dromomania—Dark deadlands—A larder in the waste—Guying the Guardias—The vagabond Swiss—An enviable odyssey—A shattered dream.

WHEN I had finished meditating on Las Batuecas I rose and put my fastest foot forward for Villalba.

It was eerie walking through that wild place in the moonlight with only the chirruping of the cicadas for company. Lonely and desolate, bewailing its barrenness to the stars, the granite-littered waste environed me on all sides. Here and there the black rocks were piled together in fantastic masses sharply silhouetted against the luminous sky, suggestive of groups of demons sitting in conclave. Now and then I felt I was being watched and followed. Sometimes from far, far away, faint with distance, would come the mournful, long-drawn-out howling of some beast : probably a dog, quite possibly a wolf.

For wolves, you should know, are common in these parts. Only last month (January, 1934) there appeared in the *London News-Chronicle* the following news item :—

Hungry wolves, which are ravaging sheep and cattle herds 40 miles from Madrid, have become so fierce that a large hunting expedition is being organised by the Government to put an end to them.

Heavy snowfalls in the Guadarrama range of

## WOLVES

mountains have driven large packs of hungry wolves from the wooded slopes into the Manzanares Valley, and the beasts are now masters of the whole plain.

The wolves are so numerous and fierce that sheepdogs avoid them and seek refuge in the sheepfolds. Every night at dusk the wolves enter the villages and carry off sheep, goats, and calves, and kill cows and donkeys. One stock farmer alone has already lost 35 head of cattle, destroyed or carried off by the wild beasts. Yesterday several farmers watched impotently while a cattle herd was attacked by wolves. Although the cows hurriedly grouped themselves together and attempted to defend themselves with their horns and hoofs, the wolves overpowered them and carried them off to the mountains.

Municipal councils of the whole of the Guadarrama district have summoned a mass meeting and sent a delegation to Madrid to ask the Minister of Agriculture to help in the organisation of defence against the marauders. Large hunting parties are to comb the Pedriza and the adjoining range between Colmenar, Miraflores, and Manzanares. The hunt will be dangerous owing to the craggy snow-covered ground and in view of the fierceness of the hunger-mad wolves.

Fancy a wolf-drive within a day's walk of a European capital !

Over the moonlit road I made rapid headway until, about four kilometres out of Villalba, the smooth tarmac ended and a causeway of rough granite setts, like a city street, took its place, obliging me to go slow. And as I hobbled along over the unsympathetic surface which was to continue without a break right into Villalba, I bethought me of another work of granite that lay at no great distance to the westward : that eighth wonder of the world, the Escorial.

El Real Sitio de San Lorenzo el Real del Escorial, to give it its full title, is the famous monastery-temple-palace-mausoleum which cranky King Philip II. caused to be erected amid the desolate wastes under the Guadarramas about 30 miles north-west of Madrid, in fulfilment of a vow he had made to St. Lawrence (San Lorenzo) on the battlefield of St. Quentin. In it are buried the kings and queens and princes and princesses of Spain.

A hugely proportioned barrack of a place built of grey granite, with high walls and rows upon rows of windows, the Escorial is more like a moorland prison than anything else. During my subsequent stay in Madrid I took a 'bus ride out to it, and decided that Dartmoor was bright and cheery by contrast.

El Escorial—called by Théophile Gautier in his *Voyage en Espagne*, “a desert of granite” and “an architectural nightmare”—is said to be planned to represent what St. Lawrence was broiled alive on: namely, a gridiron; and it took 21 years and the expenditure of some ten millions to erect. The guides tell you that it covers 400,000 square feet, has 12,000 windows and doors, 15 gateways, 86 staircases, 7 towers, 15 cloisters, 88 fountains, 16 courtyards, etc., etc. Though its royal founder had it furnished palatially, and housed in it priceless treasures of art, yet the apartments which he himself occupied were almost as plain and simple as an anchorite's cell. And for fourteen years he lived there among his monks, a religious recluse, praying and fasting and doing penance, until he died of boils and old age: a proper old hoary crank who expended his last dying breath reminding his attendants to be sure to put gilt nails in his coffin and line it throughout with the best satin.

Such is Philip's Folly, the Escorial, fittingly

deriving its name from *scoriæ*, the dross of earth ; a monument to the vanity of kings, who even in death claim rank and precedence, deeming their dust superior to that of fellow-worms.

At a late hour I arrived in Villalba, which I found to be merely a long street of houses leading down to a square in front of a railway station. And here, in an inn called the Fonda de Cuesta, I put up for the night.

Next morning I rose at seven and went downstairs, only to find the house dark and silent and everybody still abed. So I went back up for an hour, and came down at eight, with the same result. Whereupon I made suitable noises that wakened the proper persons, who served me promptly with coffee and roll at nine o'clock sharp, and came along with the bill when half-past nine was striking.

"I'm going to Madrid, *señora*," I told the duenna. "Which way do I go?"

"Straight across, *señor*." She pointed across the square.

I went across the square, but search how I would I could find no road or street or even lane leading off there. It was a cul-de-sac. So I signalled back my failure to the duenna as she stood on her doorstep watching. And her answer was to wave me on in the direction she had said. But I shook my head to intimate that there was no road that way except through the entrance of the railway station ; whereat the duenna called to a man to show the caballero the way to Madrid for heaven's sake ; which he did, pointing into the station and saying that the train wouldn't be long. That enlightening me, I went back across the square and explained to the woman that it wasn't the train I wanted, but the road.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

"The road, *señor*?" she repeated in puzzlement.

"Yes, the road. I'm walking to Madrid."

"Walking? You're *walking* to Madrid? You—*Jesús!*" And, hastily crossing herself, she rapidly gave me directions for finding the road, and quickly shut the door on me as though fearful of further acquaintance!

It was the idea of my walking, of course, that made her behave so. For in Spain walking for walking's sake is never done. Hiking is unknown. Spaniards rarely go sight-seeing in Spain. When a peasant has to travel he rides, if not on his own donkey then on a borrowed one. On the country roads a pedestrian who is a Spaniard is a *rara avis*. A Spanish tramp is almost a contradiction in terms; I encountered only two, I think, in my 1000 miles of road travel; for the tramps one meets are generally foreigners, mostly Germans. No, the Spanish people simply cannot understand anyone *choosing* to walk. To them a lone tramp is either a beggar or a madman. Hence the reason for the duenna treating me as she did on learning I was walking. She knew I wasn't a beggar—therefore I must be mad!

Maybe she was not far wrong. Soon after, when I gained the main Madrid road (which cuts across the long street of Villalba half-way up) and began walking along it, the procedure struck even me as one to be expected only of a madman.

Consider. There was the railway, on which, for a few pesetas, I could ride in ease and comfort to my destination in half an hour; and there was the road, twenty long miles of it, running across a shadeless desert under a blistering sun; and I, burdened with a pack containing an unlimited supply of money—I had chosen this road in preference to that railway.

## A CASE OF DROMOMANIA

A more open-and-shut case of dromomania would be hard to find, eh? Och, sure!

The heat was already fierce. The air fairly quivered with it. What wind there was blew hot and dry, stifling and parching with its bakehouse gusts. In an almost colourless sky, where no wisp or shred of cloud showed, the sun burned with intense incandescence that scorched the skin and seared the sight. And through the white heat, along the granite-paved road, walked I: blood simmering, flesh grilling, and throat, mouth, and lips done to a turn.

At first the road ran between flat heathy wastes dotted over with outcrops of granite, which men were quarrying. Latterly, however, it entered a rolling region where the desert has been made to blossom like the rose; and for long kilometres thereafter it was bordered on either hand by what I can only describe as a continuation of rock-gardens planted with shrubs and low trees, and gay with blue, white, and yellow flowers, where rabbits frisked and lizards, over a foot in length, basked in astonishing numbers. It was like Paradise, I tell you. And beyond, on a neighbouring hill, were clustered white villas and bungalows with red-tiled roofs. And further beyond, completing an unforgettable picture, remotely aloof in the diamond-clear air, bulked the horizon-long range of the snow-peaked Guadarramas.

Eventually, faint with hunger and heat and tormented by a terrible thirst, I came at midday into a clean, stylish, suburban place—Torrelodones; and it was like coming into a place by the sea. For here one finds oneself, as on a shore, looking out over immense levels of dark deadlands that stretch away in unrelieved monotony to the skyline. And if one looks fixedly, one can discern in the midst of

this waste the islanded mass of a white city : the white city that is the capital city of Spain—Madrid !

Yes, Madrid. A sillier site for a capital would be difficult to discover. Encompassed by sterile plains that are bounded on the north by the Guadarrama Mountains and on the south by the Mountains of Toledo, and lying more than 2000 feet above sea-level, it has the worst situation of any town in Spain, and the worst climate : hot as Africa in summer, and in winter swept by Siberian blasts.

Well, at Torrelodones, although I sought assiduously for a place where I could eat and drink—and drink—and drink, I drew a blank and was compelled to go on, unfed and unquenched, shaky at the knees, and with my tongue lolling out, to where the wilderness road lay in wait in the heat. But ah ! there was a fountain in the desert—there was a larder in the waste, in the shape of a roadside bar-restaurant not far along, where were deep verandahs, and potted palms, and snow-white cloths on cane tables beneath shady blue-and-orange striped umbrellas, and waiters in bow-ties and monkey jackets, 'n' everything.

And here, for the next two hours, I—I luxuriated.

But, boys, it wasn't in the eats I luxuriated so much as in the drinks. It wasn't in the *sardinas*, nor the *salchichones*, nor the *aceitunas*, nor the *sopa espesa*, nor the *tortilla de patatas*, nor the *merluza*, nor the *guisantes*, nor the *chuleta empañada*, nor the *coliflor*, nor the *ensalada de lechuga*, nor the *mantecado de fresa*, nor the *manzanas*, *naranjas*, *melocotones*, *uvas*, *peras*, and *bananas*. No, it was in the *limonada* afterwards, boys, and in the *agua* beforehand, between whiles, and all the time. Yes, particularly and especially in the *agua*, boys : the *agua helada fresquita* ; the fresh ice-water which was provided in unlimited supplies in cool carafes, free, gratis, and for nothing, for which no charge

was made, tariff asked, nor tip expected. And if I did quaff it in quarts, boys, it was only because there were no gallon glasses !

When I had luxuriated to a point where my anatomical dimensions rendered further luxuriating impracticable, I indulged in that most necessary adjunct to a Spanish meal—a siesta—then waddled forth into the white-hot blaze of day and resumed the road.

Some few kilometres of this brought me into the village of Las Rozas, where, as I was sitting resting by a cool well-side, a couple of Civil Guards approached and examined me curiously.

“ Who are you ? ” they asked.

“ I’m a Dane from Denmark,” I told them, “ and I’m walking round the world. Here’s my passport. Look. *British Passport*. That means, in Spanish, Danish Passport. *Journalist* means geologist. *Glasgow* is a town on the borders of Swaziland and Manchukuo. And *Domicile, England* means I’m unmarried.”

“ Have you any money ? ”

Taking out five five-peseta pieces I rang them one after another on the stone flags at the well-side.

That impressed and assured the Guardias.

“ We are looking for a blond tramp,” they then said. “ Have you seen such a one, *señor* ? ”

“ A blond tramp ? Why, yes, *señores*. Such a one passed me a while ago, riding on the back of a motor-lorry.”

Which was just another fib.

“ Many thanks, *señor*. *Adiós*.”

“ *Adiós, señores*. Don’t mention it.”

When they were gone I got up and imbibed neckful after neckful of well-water, and, resuming my way, passed out of Las Rozas. But the heat was such that when presently I came to where a partly dried-up



watercourse ran under the highway through a little brick bridge, I hesitated not a moment in leaving the road and climbing down to seek a pool wherein I could bathe my burning feet.

But on reaching the bankfoot and peering into the dark archway of the bridge, I saw sitting there a man doing precisely what I was come to do; a man with a blond look and a down-and-out aspect, who at sight of me ceased paddling his feet and hurriedly reached for a thick stick that lay near.

"It's all right, chum," I called, going forward. "*Ich bin nicht ein Guardia. Ich bin nur ein—* what-d'you-call?—*Wandersmann. Ja? Aber, Sie sind ein Deutscher, nicht wahr?*"

"No," replied the bloke, in English, resuming his paddling, while I seated myself beside him and began unlacing my shoes. "I not a Deutscher. I a Schweizer; a—a Sweess."

"A Swiss? Ah. You speak remarkably good English. . . . I say, you are the man the Guardias are looking for, aren't you?"

"*Ja.* But how you know the Guardias they look for me? They talk with you sometime? They look for you, too, maybe?"

"They talked with me in Las Rozas a short time ago, and for a joke I told them I had seen you go by on the back of a motor lorry—ha! ha! ha! Yes, they look for me, too, maybe. . . . But why do they want you? What did you do?"

"I do nothing except eat big dinner in restaurant und not pay. I cannot pay. I got no money to pay. I tell the waiter und he shake the head und the fist, very angry, und go away for Guardias. But I not wait for Guardias. Und that is all."

He himself, the bloke went on to tell, was a waiter, and had spent the preceding summer on the Riviera working in an hotel. But he got the sack and started

travelling, going first to Marseilles, then crossing the Mediterranean to Algiers, then returning to Marseilles, and thence, by way of Arles, Nîmes, Montpellier, and Narbonne, had padded the hoof right round the coast of the Gulf of Lions into Spain, and so down through Gerona, Barcelona, Tarragona, Valencia, and Alicante to Elche, where, his savings running out, he got a job in a café for a while.

"At Elche," he said, "it not like Spain. It like Africa. *Palmenwald* there. Palms, palms, palms; t'ousands und t'ousands und t'ousands. *Ja*. Tourists they come to Elche, und I make plenty money. But soon I go."

Cartagena it was that he went to next, he said, and from there, still afoot, travelled down through Murcia, Almeria, Granada, and Malaga to Gibraltar, where he crossed the Strait to Tangier, then worked his passage to Cadiz, landing there without a penny in his pocket. And from Cadiz, right up through Andalusia and La Mancha, through Jerez, Seville, Cordova, Ciudad Real, and Toledo, he had hoofed it, begging as he went, to Madrid, and was now heading north for France—if the Guardias let him.

"For the Guardias they no like me," he said. "In Andalusia they catch me und they put me in prison. *Ja*. Ten days I am in prison in Andalusia. But it do me plenty benefit. I rest und get plenty good food und too much fruit also. Und the food they not cook. I got to cook. Und I meet German boys in prison. *Ja*. German boys who the Guardias catch because they no money have got und walk all the time."

So the Swiss talked, and I listened, coveting his odyssey, envying the pennilessness that had opened for him the portals of a prison and made him free of the company of real blokes and wanderlusters, and bewailing the unlimited supply of money that had opened for me merely the swing-doors of Grand

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

Hotels and compelled me to mix with anæmic tourists and blue-blooded hidalgos.

As the Swiss and I continued to sit paddling underneath the little brick bridge in the still heat, we heard two men approach and halt by the parapet immediately above us. And by their shadows, which fell athwart the outer edge of our little pool, we could see that each wore a cocked hat and carried a sword and rifle. So, my feet being bare, I stealthily tiptoed out from beneath the arch and looked up. And what I saw made me leap back instantly into cover.

"It's the Guardias!" I hissed in the Swiss's ear. "Sit still! Speak soft! If they hear us we're done for!"

"*Grosse Götter!*"

"They didn't see me. They're sitting smoking on the parapet, facing the road."

"But they are *my* Guardias? You are sure?"

"Absolutely. Your Guardias—and mine! For if they take you, they'll take me, too, for aiding and abetting you. And I told them I was a Dane from Denmark. Oh, boy-oh-boy!—Here, you Schweizer, here's a twenty-five peseta bill. You've earned it."

"*Heilige Nacht!* Why you give me this?"

"For getting me into the best mess I've been in since coming to Spain!"

But alas! the rosy future I already imagined I saw stretching before me in the shape of prolonged incarceration in a Spanish jail, with *ladrones* and *contrabandistas* and *gitanos*, maybe, for cell-mates, didn't even begin to materialise. For there and then the Guardias, without so much as a glance below, pitched their cigarette stubs over the parapet into our little pool, and got up and walked quietly away. . . . And half an hour later the Swiss and I did the same, departing each in an opposite direction.

## LAP THE ELEVENTH

### MADRID

The voice of the city—The Immortal Two—Thronging pavements—The *pension*—Madrid—The sights—Incandescent days—The café—Café pests—Bull-fight intimated.

By myself once more, I padded along through the heat. Trees now lined the road, so I had the benefit of their shade. But motor-cars, in ever-increasing numbers, made walking far from enjoyable.

It was well seen that I was nearing the metropolis. Advertisements for wines, motor tyres, petrols, oils, garages, and hotels lined the route. Also posh villas, built in Riviera style, began to appear. So did bar-restaurants, wine gardens, and road-houses.

In time I came to the Manzanares river, which the road crosses and, turning at right angles along the bank, runs parallel with the stream all the way into Madrid. And from then onward the traffic was fierce. It reminded me of the Brighton road on Bank Holiday. Motors, motors, motors—it was more like a speedway than a highway. The noise was deafening, too. The drivers of the cars hooted their horns without cease and without need. One couldn't hear one's ears. Hoot, hoot, hoot, all the time.

This ceaseless and senseless hooting of motor horns, let me say, is what most strikes the visitor to the Spanish capital. It is the first thing one hears on awakening, and the last thing one is conscious of before falling asleep. You cannot escape

it. You are deafened by it wherever you go. It is the voice of the city. And it demonstrates as nothing else can the fundamental childishness—or maybe I mean childlikeness—of the Spanish character. For a Spaniard in a motor-car behaves exactly like a little boy. He drives as furiously as he can and makes as much noise as he can. His native easy-ness and Oriental-like patience go by the board. He is then the personification of hustle and impatience. And he plies his horn loudest and longest when in a traffic hold-up waiting for the all-clear signal.

From the crossing of the Manzanares all the way into Madrid I was passing between tall, shady trees and public parklands. At the city boundary stands a large gate, and here policemen and soldiers and Customs officials abounded. I walked through unchallenged, however, and held on past beer-gardens, amusement places, dance-halls, gymnasiums, recreation grounds, road-houses, restaurants, hotels, and refreshment booths of various kinds, and so, by way of the Paseo de la Florida, came at last to where at the Estación del Norte—Madrid's Gare du Nord—the city proper commences.

Bearing round by the station, the entrances of which were guarded by soldiers with fixed bayonets, I continued along the crowded Paseo de San Vincente and came to a tree-planted square, the Plaza de España, where I stopped for a glass of coffee at the open-air café there, and sat long gazing at two sculptured figures that dominate the place: one, tall and gaunt, in armour, bearing a lofty lance, mounted on a sorry nag, and the other, close alongside, short and tubby, in peasant dress, astride a lowly ass; the figures of none other than the Immortal Two—Don Quixote de La Mancha, and his squire, Sancho Panza!

## THE PENSION

By this time the setting sun was gilding the rooftops of the city, so, resuming my way, I presently found myself passing up the broad, splendid thoroughfare called the Avenida de Pi y Margall, beholding with something like amazement the tall white modern buildings rising on either hand, the theatre and cinema façades resplendent with neon lights, the futuristically designed shop-fronts with their coloured awnings, the packed cafés, the well-dressed people thronging the white pavements, the motors and taxis and open carriages crowding the fairway, and the cleanness and immaculate newness of everything.

Why, it wasn't like a Spanish city at all. There was nothing Old World about it whatsoever. Rather was it like a blazing white pleasure-metropolis that had been shipped bodily from some Latin-American republic and deposited there for exhibition purposes. Nay, the palpable recency and newness of it was such that I discovered myself looking for the crates and packing-straw which I felt ought still to be littering the streets !

On the look-out for a suitable hotel, I cut down a side-street off Pi y Margall, and, turning into the Calle del Desengaño, came up against something which I had frequently read about but had not yet tried. I mean a *pension*.

A pension, I understood, was a sort of cheap boarding-house. And, since the Grand Hotels which I had been putting up at of late had bored me inexpressibly with their uniform dullness and lifelessness, I decided that this opportunity of mixing with impecunious people should not be let pass. It would be a welcome change. . . . And so, to cut a long story short, I became a boarder in that pension on the Calle del Desengaño.

The place occupied the whole of the second floor

of a block of flats, and was run by a widow, three servant girls, and a cook, all of the Bloomsbury type. The dozen *pensionistas*, too, whom they catered for, were also types in their way.

There was a lanky Andalusian who dressed always in white cotton drill and spent most of his time on his balcony fingering a guitar. He was the star boarder, and the landlady worshipped and feared him. Then there was a very fat lady, so conscious of her superfluous flesh that she seldom went out. Rumour had it that she was sweet on the Andalusian. Another freak was a dwarf, whose double can be seen in a certain picture by Velazquez in the Prado Museum. Then there were two maiden ladies who conversed always in whispers ; a young girl University student ; a deaf old woman with an ear trumpet ; a wise-cracking journalist ; a melancholy bank clerk ; and a brooding Catalan whose business nobody but himself knew.

It was little different from being in an hotel. I had a bedroom to myself and came and went as I pleased. In the morning coffee-and-roll was brought by the doncella, and dinner and supper were served in the dining-room. While not exactly high-class, the fare was far from being plain, and we got as much to eat as we wanted. And the charge for board and lodging and service was only three-and-fourpence a day !

I stayed at that pension from the Tuesday night to the following Monday morning, making it my headquarters while I explored Madrid.

Madrid. White buildings, white pavements, and white, searing sunlight ; gay, well-dressed people, modish shops, thronging streets, hooting motors and taxis and clanging trams ; white-helmeted policemen with batons on point duty ; soldiers with fixed bayonets guarding places ; armed Guardias de

## M A D R I D

Asalto riding about back-to-back in open motor-lorries ; a calm-before-the-storm atmosphere ; cafés, cafés, cafés ; crippled beggars, painted señoritas, dandified idlers ; green parks, shady walks, fountains and palm-trees, and open carriages and nursemaids in native dress ; water-sellers, tie-sellers, lottery-ticket sellers, shoeblacks, and ice-cream men ; brilliant mornings, blazing afternoons, hot nights ; siesta time with shut shops and the streets being hosed ; the Puerta del Sol, the Palacio, the Calle de Alcalá, the Rastro, the Plaza Mayor, the Prado. All these, like the jumbled pieces of a kaleidoscope pattern or a jigsaw puzzle, stir in my memory when I think of Madrid, fitting themselves together to form a glittering design.

Yet it is a design that doesn't make sense. It remains a puzzle. One wonders what it means. Its glitter, too, is only a surface glitter, like that of a rainbow-hued bubble. There is no palpable substance underlying it. You can see all there is to be seen in Madrid in a couple of days. You can see all there is worth seeing in half a day, if you devote that half-day wholly to the Prado Picture Gallery.

For the Spanish capital has no background. In comparison with London or Paris, it has no past, no history. It has no storied buildings to speak of. It is an upstart capital. Toledo to the south and Segovia to the north have more solid interest and worth to their inches than Madrid has to its miles. It is as foreign as they are Spanish.

In the centre of Madrid is the Puerta del Sol, Madrid's Piccadilly Circus. The East Gate of Old Madrid once stood here, hence the name, which means Gate of the Sun. But there is nothing to see here. It is just a public cross or square where loungers congregate, and where bars, cafés, restaurants, shoeshine parlours, and bookshops abound.



The only building of any note is an old Government building. A dozen different roads and streets converge at this point, and it is likewise a tramway centre, so the traffic is generally in a jam. The pavements are always thronged with people, amongst whom beggars, tie-sellers, lottery-ticket sellers, novelty vendors, and shoeblacks—particularly shoeblacks—predominate.

The Royal Palace, or rather the National Palace, as it is now called, lies a considerable distance west of the Puerta del Sol. It—well, it is just a palace. And beyond is the Manzanares, a mere paltry trickle of a river, with its banks encased in concrete. The joke of Madrid for centuries, it is as useless a stream as any in Spain, which is a land of useless streams.

To the east of the Puerta del Sol, reached by way of the Calle de Alcalá, one of the finest streets in Europe, is the Prado. This is a spacious paseo, or promenade, planted with palms and other trees, where in the evenings Madrilenians foregather. At least it is said that they do, but I personally saw precious little foregathering. The cafés on the Calle de Alcalá were the places where the foregathering was most in evidence. And half-way down the Prado stands the Museo de Pintura, a veritable palace of painting, housing a collection of pictures such as few cities of the world can boast ; pictures by such masters as Titian, Raphael, Rubens, Tintoretto, Dürer, Holbein, Claude, Ribera, El Greco, Goya, Murillo—and Velazquez. And if the floorboards of the galleries didn't creak underfoot quite so abominably, one could really enjoy viewing these same pictures.

Along a bit from the Prado is the finest of Madrid's fine parks, the Buen Retiro. Nor is the name a misnomer. It is indeed a good retreat. To retire here from the heat and din and blinding white glare

of the boulevards, and stroll or sit in the deep shade, is like retiring to Paradise. Keep-off-the-grass notices are conspicuous by their absence. There are no fences. Refreshment booths are within easy hail. The profusion and variety of the trees is alike bewildering and entrancing. Attendants move about eternally hosing the greenery, so that the air is always cool and moist and aromatic—like the wind that breathed o'er Eden.

The Botanic-Garden approach to the Retiro is reminiscent of the quays along the Seine in Paris. For here printsellers and booksellers have their stalls. And it was strange to see familiar English books in Spanish guise: Dickens's *Hard Times*, for instance, masquerading as *Tiempos Dificiles* by 'Carlos Dickens'—and even stranger to read them. And here I noted, what I likewise noted in the bookshops of all the Spanish cities I visited, that the two most popular English authors appeared to be Edgar Wallace and P. C. Wren!

Throughout my stay in Madrid the weather maintained its superlative fineness. It was a thing to wonder at. Such bright air, such cloudlessness, such heat, and such intense sunlight, were things foreign to my ken. Incandescent day followed incandescent day, and I never ceased from marvelling. In a continual sweat I moved about, hugging always the shady side of the way and consumed by an unquenchable thirst. And, as a consequence, almost before I knew it, lo! there was I—a café-addict of the most rabid type.

I reckon it was only natural. Cafés environed me, confronting me wherever I went. So I fell. But it was the sight of the cool, unglazed, earthenware water-jars set so temptingly on every café table which brought about the fall. They were more than mortal thirst could stand. So I became a sitter.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

The *café*, you should know, is even more popular in Spain than it is in France. It doesn't belie its name either. It is not the pub or boozery you maybe imagined it was. For if you look close at what the customers are drinking you will see that it is mostly just *café* (coffee). *Café* is what the *café* sells most of. And if you look closer you will observe, much to your surprise, that although coffee is being drunk in large quantities, yet water, plain cold water, is being drunk in larger quantities still.

As I have said, every table has its cool, unglazed, earthenware water-jar—for use, not merely for ornament; and when you order coffee, which is generally served in a glass, with two or three tablets of sugar done up in a little paper packet, the waiter always brings you a second glass; and you help yourself from the water-jar, drinking usually more water than coffee.

You can sit as long as you like. All about you Spaniards are smoking cigarettes and talking politics, politics, politics; for the Spaniard takes his politics even more seriously than does the Frenchman. Again, if you hear the word *mañana* (to-morrow) let drop once you hear it let drop a thousand times. It is the hardest-worked word in the language. Then you are continually hearing hand-claps; the Oriental hand-clap, brought into Spain by the Moors, being the Spanish mode of summoning attendance.

Also, you are kept being bothered by one *café* pest after another.

First it is a beggarwoman, with a child in her arms, who appears at your elbow as if by magic, for you neither see nor hear her approach. She talks so rapidly and so low that you cannot make out a single word she says. You give her a copper or ask her to excuse you for God's sake, but either

## CAFÉ PESTS

way her expression of calm, fatalistic resignation doesn't change. She moves off, and a shoeblack with his footstool comes along; but, suddenly recollecting that he has asked you at least twice in the last ten minutes if you would like a shoe-shine, he avoids your wild eye and seeks another victim elsewhere. Then up comes a tie-seller, dozens of neckties of every pattern and colour hung over either arm and bow-ties hung around his neck. Instinct has told him that you are a foreigner, so you have either got to buy a tie or else strangle him with one; he won't take no for an answer. And no sooner are you rid of him than another pest takes his place, this time a bloke selling tickets for the lottery.

In Spain the lottery is an institution. It is run by the State, and is a means of revenue. In every town there are shops, *lottererías*, which sell nothing but lottery tickets. For the Spaniard is a born gamester. From early childhood he is accustomed to having a flutter. Nearly all ice-cream barrows are fitted with a little lottery wheel, which you see tiny tots expertly twirling in the hope of getting two or three sliders for the price of one. At all the fairs, too, lottery wheels, with cigars and fancy goods as prizes, are legion.

Well, when you have stood about as many café pests as you can stand, and sat as long as you care to sit, you summon the waiter either by a hand-clap or by rapping on the table-top with a coin, and pay him, giving him a tip—a ha'penny or a penny—and he thanks you by rapping on the table-top in turn. And off you go—to seek a cooler café.

In my wanderings about Madrid I didn't fail to notice certain gaudy posters, depicting a matador in the act of giving a bull the *coup de grâce* and announcing that on Sunday, at the Plaza de Toros,

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

there would take place a bull-fight, tickets for which would be on sale at an address in the Calle de la Victoria, off the Puerta del Sol, during the forenoon and evening of Saturday.

Accordingly, knowing that it is the early bird that catches the worm, I made my way to the Calle de la Victoria at an early hour on Saturday morning. But alas! I couldn't get near the place. A great concourse of earlier birds than I, hundreds strong, waiting for the ticket-office to open, jam-packed the street from end to end. So I caught a tram and took a run out to see what was doing at the Plaza de Toros.

## LAP THE TWELFTH

### THE BULL-FIGHT

The Plaza de Toros—The Moorish bull-fight—Present-day bull-fighting—The performers—Sunday—The different 'localities'—Colourful spectacle—Entrada de la Cuadrilla—The Paseo—Enter the bull—The cape act—A unique hat-trick—Suerte de Picar—The screaming horse—Suerte de Banderillear—Feigning death—Suerte de Matar—The great moment—A bungling butcher—The death-thrust—Seven other bulls!—Odious comparison—People in glass houses—

MADRID has two Plazas de Toros—an old one and a new. The latter, a huge building of red brick, was erected in 1928, while the former, not so large, dates back to 1874, when it was erected at a cost of 3,000,000 reales, and can accommodate from 12,000 to 14,000 spectators.

It is a perfectly circular building, two storeys high, the outer wall pierced by rows of window openings arched after the Moorish fashion, with an imposing entrance gateway likewise Moorish in design. It is suggestive of the Coliseum. And the interior, with its spacious arena of yellow sand open to the blue sky and burning sun, and its tiers upon tiers of seats climbing to an encircling red-tiled roof, might be that of a circus of Old Rome.

There were a lot of idlers about, and from these I learned that very seldom are bull-fight tickets issued at bull-rings, and that only at the ticket-office in the Calle de la Victoria, which I had just come from, could I procure a ticket. So I gave it up as a bad job, and went away. . . . But that same

evening, when passing the Calle de la Victoria, I saw the office still open, and, by luck, managed to secure one of the few tickets left: a Sol y Sombra (Sun and Shade) ticket, price 8.50 pesetas, for which I willingly planked down the 10.50 pesetas (5s. 3d.) demanded.

And now, while we're waiting for Sunday to arrive, let me tell you something about bull-fighting.

Though bulls were frequently baited in the arenas of the ancients, yet bull-fighting, as practised to-day in Spain, is a comparatively modern sport. It originated with the Moors. But the Moorish bull-fight was not the blood-and-guts affair which the present-day Spanish bull-fight more or less is. The contestants were not low-born professionals, but noblemen—the flower of Moorish chivalry—by whom the wanton shedding of blood was never permitted to pollute their equestrian diversions.

Splendidly mounted, with equipment of the most sumptuous description, such as we read of in the pages of the *Arabian Nights*, these Moorish paragons, whose superb horsemanship was the wonder of Christendom and Heathendom alike, engaged the bull armed only with a short, heavy javelin. And if their stroke landed elsewhere than along the spine in front of the shoulder, as the rules required, they had to retire; while if their weapon broke, or flew from their grasp, they were adjudged to have sustained an irremediable disgrace. And the scenes of these contests were often the half-ruined Roman amphitheatres of such places as Toledo, Tarragona, Cordova, Merida, etc.

Then, after the eclipse of the Moslem in Spain, the Moorish mode of bull-fighting was practised by Spanish nobility, and even royalty, exclusively, none of vulgar rank being permitted to take part;

## P R E S E N T - D A Y   B U L L - F I G H T I N G

and the principle of the thing—the display of horsemanship and dexterity in the use of the weapon—was still maintained, as it is still maintained in modern Portugal, where bloodshed is avoided, the horses taking part not being touched, nor the bulls, whose horns are tipped with leather, even being killed.

By the end of the 17th century, however, the sport had degenerated and fallen into the hands of professional bull-fighters, one of whom it was who first introduced the *estoque*, or rapier, and the *muleta*, the red flag or lure, which matadors have used ever since.

Bull-fighting is not only a sport. It is an art, a science. At Seville there is a university or training school where would-be bull-fighters have to undergo a gruelling course of 'study' before they obtain their licence.

Libraries of books have been written around the subject. It has been the inspiration of great poets and novelists and dramatists and musicians and painters. Its history has been recorded, the lives of eminent bull-fighters have been chronicled. Journals and magazines devoted solely to the sport are to be seen on every bookstall in Spain.

Unlike football or cricket or horse-racing in this country, bull-fighting is not just followed by a comparative few ; it is followed more or less by the whole nation. The State has at various times attempted in vain to suppress it. It has survived the condemnation of the Pope of Rome. Playing at bull-fights is the children's favourite pastime. To be a bull-fighter is the ambition of every boy. Successful bull-fighters are the darlings of the masses. More popular than film stars, they are paid bigger salaries than many Ministers of State. The breeding of pedigree fighting bulls for the arena is a national industry.



## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

The Spanish name for the bull-fight is *corrida de toros*, which means a coursing, or running, of bulls. On gala occasions it is sometimes called a *fiesta de toros*, or bull-feast. The building in which it takes place is the Plaza de Toros, and the bull-fighting season lasts from March to October.

Spain, by the way, is not the only country where bull-fights take place. In Southern France, Portugal, Peru, Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela, the sport is equally popular.

In the old days before proper bull-rings existed, the fight was usually staged in the town square; the Plaza Mayor in Old Madrid witnessed many a bull-fight; and to-day, in small towns that cannot afford a Plaza de Toros, this is still the practice. The streets leading into the square are strongly barricaded, and the bulls turned loose into the space thus enclosed.

The general name for bull-fighter is *torero*. Toreador, which means the same thing, is a word used more by foreigners than by Spaniards.

The rank-and-file torero is called a *chulo*. He is not much more than an apprentice bull-fighter, and it is he who braves the bull with the scarlet-lined *capa*, or cape, whence he derives his other name of *capeador*.

Above him in importance is the *banderillero*, or dart-man, whose job it is to plant the *banderillas*, or darts, on either side of the bull's neck.

Next comes the *picador*, or pike-man. He is the horseman who, armed with a long pike or lance, meets, and tries to turn, the head-on charge of the bull.

Then lastly, but first in importance, is the *espada*, or swordsman. He is the star performer, the hero of the arena, the king of the bull-ring, boss of the whole shebang. His is the act that decides and

## SUNDAY

finishes the fight. For the *espada* is the *matador*, the killer, who delivers to the bull the death-thrust.

Espadas' salaries vary, ranging from about £200 per fight upward. In Mexico the pay is better than in Spain, bull-fighters of first-class ability receiving as much as £1000 for one performance. The great Belmonte is said to have received £1400 for a single afternoon's work. But if espadas' pay is high, their expenses are heavy. Sporting writers must be generously tipped and bribed in order to secure favourable press notice, bull-fighting journals have to be subscribed to, a considerable number of bull-ring hangers-on have to be given largesse, etc., etc. Also the *espada* must live in style. Then his equipment is an expensive item. His sword costs something like £20, and his costume anything from £30 to £50, and he generally has more than one of these; while his cloaks and *muletas*, which don't last long, cost £5 and £2 apiece.

And now that you know something about bull-fighting, and as Sunday is now arrived—take my ticket and go to the bull-fight!

It is afternoon, and all roads lead to the Plaza de Toros. Trams, taxis, and private cars add their quota of human freight to the crowds surging up the approach road. And it is blazing hot. In a sky of brass the sun burns with intolerable fervour. Phew! You hope your seat in the *Sol y Sombra* will be more *Sombra* than *Sol*!

Outside the entrance gate are men and boys and women distributing handbills and programmes and selling peanuts and sweets and fruit and water and soft drinks and paper fans and *almohadillas de papel*—little paper cushions stuffed with shavings for use on the hard benches inside—and you are pestered

by blokes who ask you if you want to buy a ticket. These are the *revendedores*, or re-sellers, who buy up bull-fight tickets beforehand in order to sell again at a profit to those desirous of a good seat.

If you keep your head you will have no difficulty in locating your seat. It is waiting for you. For every seat of the thousands upon thousands of seats is marked off and numbered—even those on the stone tiers in the Sol—and this number is printed on your ticket. When you buy a ticket, therefore, you automatically book your seat. And all you have to do now, after passing through the entrance gate, is to walk along the colonade encircling the bull-ring until you come to the door above which your particular 'locality' is indicated in lettering.

There are various 'localities' or divisions, as you can see by referring to your programme. The best is at the ringside, close to the barrier, in the *tendidos*. Then there are the *balconillos de meseta*, the *gradas*, and the *andanadas*, each of which is subdivided into sections having separate names; the *tendidos*, for example, being subdivided into *barreras*, *contrabarreras*, *delanteras*, *filas*, *tabloncillos*, *balconillos*, and *sobrepuestas*. Also, there are the *palcos*, or private boxes. And since all these 'localities' are partly in the Sol, partly in the Sombra, and partly in the Sol y Sombra, the prices, which to-day range from 4 to 80 pesetas, vary accordingly. The cheapest seats are in the sun, the dearest in the shade.

Having entered the door leading into your 'locality'—Andanada, 5, Sol y Sombra—the attendant pilots you to your place—which is the end seat of the front row of a balcony—and for this he expects a small tip. Thruppence suffices. Then he gives you a leather cushion, for which you pay 60 centimos, and you sit down and bend your

## COLOURFUL SPECTACLE

astonished gaze on the setting of one of the most colourful spectacles on earth.

What a sea of faces! What a babel of voices! What a mass of humanity! From the ringside seats to the topmost balcony the Plaza is close-packed. There are as many women and girls as there are men and youths. The Sol, on which the sun blazes with incandescent intensity, hurts the eye to look at, as a broad belt of gold encrusted with scintillating diamonds and emeralds and rubies. It is alive with colour. Thousands of fans, of every hue betwixt black and white, wave and flutter incessantly. It is a living rainbow. The glitter of earrings, the sparkle of eyes, the sheen of hair, the glow of red, blue, green, and orange dresses, the blaze of white linen, the yellow of the arena sands, the scarlet of the tiled balconies, the brassy, overtopping sky, the blinding sunlight, the wafts of hot, scented, sweaty, stifling air, the cries of the programme-sellers, sweet-sellers, cake-and-sandwich sellers, cushion-sellers, and particularly of the water-sellers, with their "*Agua! Agua! Quién quiere agua?*"—the barbaric verve and gorgeousness of it all enchants and thrills. It is the past, the pagan past, brought back. You are in a Roman circus awaiting the advent of charioteers, gladiators, wild beasts, and Christian martyrs.

Barbaric or pagan it may be, it is at least orderly. You mark with astonishment the total absence of rowdyism, horseplay, or the hooligan element. You do not have to keep feeling at your pocket-book, as you have to do at home when in a football crowd or in a cricket crowd or among sportsmen at a race meeting. Of pickpockets and sneak-thieves there are none. How do you know? Because the atmosphere is charged with honesty, kindness, and goodwill and neighbourliness. Also, there is a

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

band. And it was Cervantes himself who said :  
" Where there is music, nothing really bad can be."  
So if you have stones to throw, hold your hand.

The heat grows worse. You are bathed in sweat. Near you are men sitting in their shirt-sleeves, so you take off your tie and loosen your collar. Then, happening to glance along the balcony, you sweat a lot more. For you see that the sun is rapidly stealing along your way. Blast ! You realise that you are on the wrong side of the arena to get any benefit out of your Sol y Sombra ticket. In a short time you will be in the Sol !

But now there is a stir. The water-cart and the men who were raking the sand leave the arena. The president enters his box. The clock points to a quarter past four. The band bursts into music. The bull-fight is on.

Ah, here they come. In a slow, stately procession the toreros enter the arena and advance across the sunny sands to salute the president.

This processional entrance is termed the *Entrada de la Cuadrilla*.

In front ride four horsemen dressed in the picturesque costume of 16th century police : black hats with nodding white plumes, large square linen collars, black waist-length cloaks, black knee-breeches, and black stockings. They are the *alcuaciles*, and this is the only time you see them in the ring ; they take no part in the fight.

Next follow on foot the *espadas*, *banderilleros*, and *chulos*, in their queer little hats, white shirts, narrow ties, cloaks, monkey-jackets, breeches, hose, and heelless shoes. They are a brave sight. Although dressed alike, the colours of their costumes differ. One is in crimson, another in light blue, a third in bright green, a fourth in yellow, a fifth in violet, etc., and all are aglitter with gold and silver braid

## THE PASEO

and tinsel and spangles. And you notice how each wears a funny little pigtail, and carries his left arm wrapped in the folds of his cloak in a certain manner.

Next come the picadores, three of them, mounted on sorry nags and holding their lances aloft. They are dressed in a yellow costume and wear a broad-brimmed, round-crowned hat with chin-strap. Their saddles are high and their stirrups of the box type, and owing to the padded condition of their legs their seat is not very graceful.

Last of all, completing the procession, come the muleteers in blouses and black berets driving the mule-teams, whose part in the fight is that of dragging from the arena the carcasses of the slain beasts. There are two of these, with three mules to each team, the animals being decked out in flags and fancy red harness sewn with bells.

Although so gay and colourful, this Paseo of the toreros is a sobering sight. It strikes you as being more of a funeral march than anything else. The mien of the bull-fighters, erect, unsmiling, proudly solemn, is that of mourners—mourners, you suddenly realise, attending what may turn out to be their own funeral!

Before entering the ring these men received the Sacrament from the priest in the little chapel behind the scenes. And all through the fight that priest will be waiting there ready to minister to any dying man who may be brought in. For a bull-fight is not just a braving of bulls. It is a braving of horrible and bloody death. And as the glittering procession now passes from the sunlit half of the arena into the shady half, towards the palco of the president, you know that it is really into the shadow of death that they are passing. And as each member of the gallant band bows in turn to the president, you think of the gladiators of Old Rome and their brave saluta-

tion : " Hail, Cæsar ! We, who are about to die, salute thee ! "

When all have passed the president (who is merely the presiding official, and not, as you maybe imagined, the President of the Republic) he tosses down the key of the *toril*, or bull-pen, to an alguacil, and the arena is cleared of all except those toreros who are to take part in the preliminary cape act.

Just at that, though, the sun reaches you where you sit sweltering in what was the Sombra but is now the Sol, and from then on to the finish of the fight you are roasted by its merciless furnace heat, like a herring on a griddle, sweat flowing from every pore, and a raging, unquenchable thirst consuming you. Phew ! If it's like this in May, what like must it be in July and August !

And now at last from the dark *toril* issues the bull.

Out he comes with a rush, but, having been kept in darkness for hours previously, the sun blinds him, and he pulls up short, momentarily dazed and bewildered by his freedom, the pain of the iron pin in his shoulder making him snort and toss his head.

This pin was stuck into him ere he left the *toril*. From it flutter coloured streamers—the colours of his breeder—and a thin thread of blood trickles from the wound. Also, on his flank you see branded his breeder's mark. And as he stands there halted on the sunlit sands, a noble brute, his dark hide sleek with health, his splendid body vibrant with force and vigour, you cannot but deplore his imminent fate : butchered to make a Spanish holiday.

The *aficionados*, or 'fancy,' in the ringside seats eye him critically. He is a fine specimen, a bull of warrant, worth somewhere between £40 and £70, raised in a certain famous *vacada*, or breeding establishment, in Andalusia : the land where the best bulls, as well as the most daring bull-fighters, come

## THE CAPE ACT

from. He will fight and die like the thoroughbred he is. There he goes.

Himself now, the bull glares round the arena, wildly seeking an object on which to vent his just wrath. And he finds it. A chulo is standing afar off, close to the barrier, derisively flourishing a scarlet-lined cape. With a roar of rage the bull charges valiantly across the sands. For as yet he is wholly unaware that he is foredoomed to die. As yet he has still his illusions. As yet in his dim mind there has arisen no conception that his two-legged tormentors, though fashioned after the image of their God, might not be gods but devils. All he knows is his hate of them. All he seeks is revenge. The waving scarlet maddens him.

But the chulo doesn't meet that headlong charge. He skips nimbly into the narrow space between the barrier and a board shelter, which the foiled bull horns till the splinters fly. Then further along the barrier another chulo waves a cloak, and another charge follows, this time the bull coming up so swiftly that the chulo takes a flying jump and vaults over the barrier, helped, it appears, by the beast's horns.

Turning now into the middle of the arena, the bull is confronted by yet another chulo waving infuriating scarlet. He pauses undecided, tossing his head and spurning the sand, then, gathering together his massive bulk, he gallops full-tilt at the cloak, which is held to the side at arm's length. And this time his tormentor stands his ground. With a dexterous movement he twirls the cloak out of the way of the bull, who rushes past. But yet the chulo doesn't move. The bull thereupon wheels and charges again, and again charges only thin air. And still the chulo stands. And the spectators applaud vehemently. And again the bull wheels,



and for the third time accepts the challenge of the scarlet, but with the same result. And by the thundering roar that greets this feat of the chulo you know that he has done something that takes some doing. And he bows in response, obviously very much pleased with himself.

Another chulo, lashed by envy into a frenzy of daring, now claims the attention of the multitude and proceeds to go one better. Instead of merely standing still, like the other, he actually awaits the charge of the bull—*kneeling on one knee!*

The watching host thrills and holds its breath. The bull charges, and the kneeling chulo does as the other did, timely flirting the cloak away from the animal so that it encounters only air and rushes past. And the applause is deafening. Then the bull wheels and comes a second time at the kneeling chulo, who again is successful in his manœuvre. And at that the spectators yell their appreciation, and rise to their feet as one man to watch, intensely excited, while the daredevil cloakman, still kneeling, braves the bull successfully a third time, and so achieves a unique hat-trick; upon which the foundations of the Plaza shake and tremble to the Niagara-like roar that bursts simultaneously from ten thousand throats.

Amid the tumult and the shouting is heard a trumpet call, and you brace yourself, knowing that it heralds the infamous phase of the fight: the Suerte de Picar.

Three picadores ride into the arena. Hugging the barrier they urge their awkward mounts along to within vicinity of the bull, when the foremost coaxes his horse forward, broadside on, and with lance couched prepares to receive the charge.

Both his legs are protected like a cricketer's, but with leather-covered steel leggings instead of

pads, the right being better protected than the left, as it is the one presented to the bull. His horse, a proper Rosinante, broken and old and on its last legs, fit only for the knacker's yard, is shielded on its right flank by a stuffed leather apron that reaches below its belly. Also, it is blindfolded. A black bandage is bound—shall we say mercifully?—over its eyes.

The bull, whose wrath the preliminary cloak-play has fanned into terrible heat, now hurls himself with lowered horns at horse and rider.

Rising in his stirrups and lunging forward and downward, the picador drives the point of his pike into the bull's shoulder. The shock of impact staggers the horse, but it rallies, and the rider succeeds in thrusting the bull off. But only for a moment. With a terrifying bellow the pain-maddened brute comes charging back at him, evades the pike, barges full-tilt into the horse, and with a powerful upward heave of his head lifts horse and rider completely off the ground.

For a breathless second they balance tottering in the air, then over they topple, the horse falling crash on its side with the picador imprisoned under it.

Forward rush the chulos, some to help extricate the rider and others to try to draw the bull off. But the bull refuses to be drawn off. At last he has something on which he can expend his wrath. Standing over the poor bewildered horse he again and again gores it with his horns till the belly bursts asunder and the entire digestive system is exposed.

You sit fixed to your seat in fearful fascination. You cannot remove your gaze. The sweat on your body turns icy cold. The muscles of your face grow rigid and hard. You are aware that the Spaniards round you are not exulting in the sight but are trying their best to seem to ignore it. While

most of the womenfolk look on with true womanly interest, some turn their head away or take little feminine peeps from behind the shelter of their fan.

At length the chulos succeed in drawing the bull off, and proceed to manœuvre him towards a second picador. The fallen rider thereupon extricates himself with help, for his padded legs render him almost helpless, and, remounting his horse which has somehow struggled to its feet, rides slowly out of the arena, the poor blindfolded beast under him reeling and staggering and dripping blood and occasionally tripping on its trailing entrails.

Meanwhile the bull, with bits of horseflesh sticking to his bloodstained horns, has charged the second picador twice and been painfully repulsed both times. He therefore singles out the third picador for combat. Charging with irresistible force he bears the horse back against the wooden barrier, where he vents his rage and fury upon the helpless beast in murderous fashion, butting and goring and ripping, completely beside himself.

Under the savage onslaught the mangled, disembowelled horse sinks to the sand, leaving the picador clinging to the top of the barrier. But the bull horns it mercilessly to its feet again, and it staggers out into the middle of the arena, and, rearing on its hind legs, with all its insides hanging down, and pawing the air in its agony, it gives one terrible, soul-piercing scream of fear, then collapses, to lie twitching convulsively in an ever-widening puddle of blood.

As through a mist you then watch the chulos draw the bull off, while a *puntillero*, or dagger-man, digs and hacks with his little pointed dagger into the back of the horse's neck till he pierces the spinal marrow, and so puts the tortured beast out of pain, releasing it from its bondage in a most damnable,

## SUERTE DE BANDERILLEAR

man-polluted world. And, as a white sheet is flung over the stiffening carcase, a trumpet call ushers in the next course of this feast of blood and guts : the Suerte de Banderillear.

A chulo holding a banderilla in either hand takes his stand in the middle of the arena. These banderillas are barbed darts, about two feet long, decorated with cut paper of different colours, and the banderillero brandishes them above his head to attract the bull.

The bull canters towards him. Poised on tiptoe, the man waits till the animal is almost upon him, when he breaks into a run, dexterously plants both darts in the bull's neck, one on either side, and leaps nimbly away.

The bull shies and bucks like a broncho, trying in vain to shake loose the dangling banderillas. Sometimes, in the case of a bull who has shown not enough fighting spirit, *banderillas de fuego*, or fire-darts, are used to ginger him up, the crackers exploding the moment they enter the beast's neck.

A second chulo armed with two more banderillas now entices the bull towards him. The bull charges. The man plants the darts as before. One, however, isn't planted properly, and the bull's cavortings loosen it and send it flying amongst the ringsiders, who indulge in a wild scramble to secure the blood-soaked thing as a trophy. Then the bull, mad with pain, after chasing his tormentors for their lives, attacks the sheeted carcase of the mangled horse which is still lying on the sand, savages it to his content, and trots off round the ring with the blood-stained shroud, which has become entangled in his horns, streaming behind like a pennant.

Everybody laughs.

A chulo with a third pair of banderillas challenges the bull once more. He succeeds in planting them

alongside the others in the beast's neck all right, but on leaping away he somehow trips and pitches headlong to the ground, where with great presence of mind he instantly stretches himself out stiff and motionless, feigning death in order to try to fool the bull, who has wheeled and is charging down on him, bellowing with rage and pain.

Over the watching multitude a hush falls. Anxious eyes and tense faces are bent on the prostrate figure on the sand. Women furtively cross themselves.

The bull comes straight for the chulo. Without slackening pace he lowers his horns and scoops the body from the sand to hurl it, whirling round and round, ahead of him. And so quiet is everything that you distinctly hear the thud of its fall. But still the chulo feigns. He lies where he has fallen, perfectly motionless, not a sound escaping him. And again the bull scoops him up and hurls him forward, and follows, to nose him onward like a roll of waxcloth. And still the chulo acts as if dead. Then the bull, the bunch of banderillas in his neck bristling like a mane, lowers his head till the massive forehead rests on the man's ribs, and, very slowly and very deliberately, throwing all the mighty weight and vigour of his body into the movement, he—he *leans* upon the chulo.

Again, again, and again the beast applies the pressure. But the victim, with a fortitude truly Spartan, neither squirms nor utters a sound. Yet the pressure must be terrific, the agony of crushed ribs and pulped tissue must be intense. Still, though you cannot but admire such endurance, your pity is somehow not aroused. For the man is only getting what was coming to him ; he deserves all that he is receiving. Your sympathies are all with the bull, who is merely doing as he has been done by. Inwardly you are egging the brute on.

## SUERTE DE MATAR

Meanwhile the other chulos have been making frantic efforts to entice the bull away. Now at last they succeed, and three attendants rush to the assistance of the stricken man. Picking him up, they start carrying him from the arena, but so excruciating is the pain of his hurt that time and again he writhes completely out of their grasp, kicking and twisting in horrible fashion. Yet such is his stoicism that he allows neither whimper nor moan to escape him all the while. Then more attendants go to help, and he is finally borne out, still wrestling and fighting and climbing the air in unutterable agony.

Immediately following this spectacular exit a trumpet call rings out across the sands, heralding the last phase of the fight: the Suerte de Matar.

The hero of this is the espada. After bowing to the president he advances alone towards the bull, armed with rapier and muleta, which is a flag of red serge about a yard square mounted on a short staff. This he holds before him in his left hand, while with his right he grasps the sword, concealing its blade within the folds of the muleta.

By this time the bull is sorely winded, and greatly weakened by loss of blood. His hide, so sleek before, is now foul with dust and sweat, and stained crimson. His action is slower and his rushes have become mechanical, lacking spirit. He is a broken bull. He now knows he is doomed. He smells death, and it frightens him. Poor beast.

The espada advances across the arena waving the muleta. The bull sees him but refuses the challenge until the man is almost upon him, when he makes a half-hearted rush at the lure, which is whirled aside so that he encounters only air. Then the espada follows him up and proceeds to play with him.

With sides heaving and head lowered in great

weariness, the animal stands gazing at its tormentor as though pleading to be put out of its misery. But the espada chooses to prolong the agony. Calm and contemptuous, he dangles the muleta in the beast's very eyes, flapping it repeatedly in the face with a deliberate 'wiping' motion that draws plaudits from the spectators. Yet the humiliated bull stands passive and lets the man have his will of him.

Then at last the espada prepares to deliver the death-thrust.

Manceuvring the animal into a suitable position, he draws himself up in front of it, with the muleta extended before him like a shield, under cover of which he cautiously raises his sword and takes aim, very much like an archer. And as he looks along the blade towards the mark—in the back between the shoulders, a little to the left so as to penetrate the heart—you see him, with little shuffling movements of his feet, edging closer and closer to the quarry.

The watching thousands are hushed. Every eye is focussed on the point of the glittering blade. The great moment has arrived.

Suddenly the espada stiffens. He jerks up his left knee, raising it so that the foot is on tiptoe; then, a second before the bull charges, he breaks into a little run, lunges forward, and, with all the strength of his arm and shoulder, drives the sword between the beast's shoulders, burying it up to the hilt—and leaps clear.

Pandemonium breaks loose. The roar of the bull is drowned in the derisive roar of the crowd. Hoots and jeers resound on every side. Cushions are thrown into the ring.

For the espada has bungled. The renowned espada, of whom such great things were prophesied,

has bungled. He has missed, and the bull, who ought by now to be kicking his last kick on the sand, is running roaring round the arena with half a foot of the bungler's sword protruding from his side !

Although the man must be a raging ferment within, outwardly he appears calm and unmoved, seemingly oblivious of the barracking. Procuring another sword from his attendant sword-handler, he follows the bull up and once again manœuvres the animal into position.

The espada dangles the muleta in the eyes of the bull as before to distract its attention, while he makes a sudden snatch at the buried sword, wrenches it from its scabbard of flesh in one mighty tug, and sends the reeking thing flying from him.

The pain causes the beast to flinch and stagger, but it still keeps its feet, standing with head lowered to the sand, coughing up blood. The espada thereupon drops on one knee, and, cautiously extending a hand, touches the tip of one of the horns with a caressing movement.

By the applause that greets this feat you know that the espada has done something which all good espadas should be able to do. He has, in fact, executed what in bull-ring parlance is known as *un adorna de rodillas*. For everything, every little pass and turn and flourish, has its special name, as *veronica*, *muletazo*, etc., etc. And it is to watch the nice skill with which the toreros perform all the varied passes and turns and flourishes that the Spaniard attends bull-fights, it is said. The exhibition of ringcraft, and not the butchering of bulls nor the disembowelling of horses, is what he actually glories in, it is further said.

The espada, heartened by the applause, again prepares to deliver the death-thrust. With his sword's point he first callously forces down the bull's



nose to the sand, then lunges to the mark. But the sword jams, and only penetrates a little way, and the bull tosses it out amid prolonged boos and jeers from the spectators.

Still outwardly unperturbed the espada procures another sword and tries again, and again, and yet again—to no purpose. Though the bull's shoulders are streaming with blood and the wound around the mark is as big as a basin, yet the beast, tottering pitiably, refuses to fall. And the watching multitude is silent with disgust. The veil of glamour is momentarily torn aside and the espada is seen for what he is—a bloody, bungling butcher, who can't even make beef out of his bull.

At last the man makes a desperate lunge, plunges the sword hilt-deep in the animal, penetrates the heart, and the bull drops as though pole-axed, his limbs kicking galvanically in the death-throe. Then he finally subsides, the puntillero makes assurance doubly sure with his little dagger, and the mule-teams come jingling into the arena.

The fight is finished.

Hitching the carcase of the bull to the harness with deft hands, the muleteers whip up the mules, and, wheeling the animals in a wide circle for effect, drive them at a rapid gallop straight for the exit—whips cracking, flags fluttering, bells tinkling, and dust flying up behind—while the band plays and the spectators cheer.

Ah, but for the carcase of the poor mangled horse, which has lain all this time on the sands, there is no cheer. In silence it is let go, dragged ingloriously through the dust. Though maybe once the cynosure of admiring eyes on an English race-track, the pride of some green paddock, it is now let go as unobserved as the other rakings from the sand. For as offal it is regarded by the Spaniard: the Spaniard, mark,

## SEVEN OTHER BULLS!

whose proud title of *caballero* signifies a man who owns a horse, or, in other words, a GENTLEMAN!

Wiping the sweat from your streaming face you glance at the clock, and are astonished to find that the entire performance, from the entrance of the toreros to the exit of the slain bull, has taken not quite twenty minutes. Also, you realise that only one bull has been killed, and that you have still to see the killing of no less than *seven* others!

Quickly the bloodstained sands are raked over and the ring is cleared, and a fresh bull is loosed from the toril to be confronted in turn with capeadores, picadores, banderilleros, and espada, exactly as you have seen. Then, when a third and fourth bull have been dispatched with similar procedure, there is a short interval while the band plays and a water-cart moistens the arena and water-sellers moisten you, following which the remaining bulls are successively disposed of; the bull-fight being over by 6.30, the whole affair taking just two and a quarter hours in all.

Although the procedure is identical throughout, the incidents of combat vary. In the second round, for instance, a chulo evokes riotous applause by placing one foot between the charging bull's horns and allowing himself to be lifted completely over the animal. Also, the espada who so badly bungled in the first round regains his lost face in brilliant style, killing outright at the initial attempt three bulls in succession, so that hats instead of cushions rain upon the arena.

The casualty list is not large, considering. It comprises merely eight bulls done to death, one man mangled, two mauled, three horses fatally gored, five others disembowelled but able to leave the arena, and a disquieting quantity of lost hide and hair.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

Roughly, an average of 6000 horses yearly meet their death in the bull-rings of Spain. But, as you leave the Plaza de Toros after the performance and ponder on this, it fades into ludicrous insignificance beside the fact that in your own enlightened country, which regards Spaniards as a sort of lesser breed without the law, the average number, not of mere mangy nags, but of human beings—men, women, and children—who are allowed to be killed annually with almost perfect impunity by legally licenced manslaughterers on the open roads and pavements, is no less than 7000 ; while of those injured and maimed for life the monstrous total is 200,000 !

Hence, dearly as you would love to throw a stone at bull-fighting, you don't dare. The insular house in which you and your enlightened countrymen live is made of too, too brittle glass for you to think of throwing even the tiniest, most infinitesimal grain of sand, far less a stone.

Granted that bull-fights are horrible spectacles which should be suppressed ; but so also are Army tattoos and Air Force pageants. And the mere baiting of brutes cannot for a moment compare with these deliberate, nation-wide advertised and Church and State sanctioned glorifications of mass human slaughter.

Granted, too, that the cruelty to dumb animals involved is unjustifiable ; but is unjustifiable cruelty to dumb animals unknown in your own country ? Haven't you got, and don't you need, a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ? Haven't you got so-called sports wherein cruelty to animals is the alluring feature ? Haven't you got stag-hunting and fox-hunting and steeplechasing and hare-coursing and cock-fighting and angling and fowling, etc., etc., etc., etc. ? And haven't you got zoos and menageries whither you repair on holidays

to revel in the sight of beasts and birds unjustifiably confined behind prison bars for the term of their unnatural life? And haven't you, from time immemorial, forced horses to take part in your bloody wars? And if all the blood and horror and cruelty of all the bull-fighting that has ever taken place could be crammed together into one single arena, yet, large as it would be, wouldn't that arena be infinitely small almost to invisibility compared with the arena of the Great War wherein your own enlightened country weltered and gloried like a pagan berserk? Wouldn't it, you hypocrite?

Then let Spaniards have their bull-fights. In their love of cruelty for its own sake they are not a race apart. In that respect there is only one race apart in all the world. And that race is the human race—Heaven help it.

## LAP THE THIRTEENTH

### BOUND FOR ANDALUSIA

Into the deep south—The first lift—A Cave-man of the Prime  
—When the world was young—Getafe—Loss of a leg—The  
Moorish *norja*—Great Snakes!—Toasting the Conshies—  
An army of ants—The Eiffel Tower—Sights of Paris—On  
Toledan soil.

THE day after the bull-fight I left Madrid.

In the clear, white, burning blaze of morning I made my way down past the Plaza Mayor and the Mercado de la Cebada, and so out through the great Toledo Gate and over the Manzanares on to the road that leads into the deep south, into Andalusia ; glad to be again afoot, and eager for Toledo, Cordova, Seville, Cadiz, Gibraltar, and the sight of the sea and the hills of Africa.

Behind, as I glanced back from where the highway begins to rise from the river level, could be seen the snow-mantled ramparts of the Sierra de Guadarrama shimmering unsubstantially through the heat haze, hovering above the city like an anchored chain of Laputan isles rather than like mountains. For though the clarity of the upper air had brought the high tops deceptively near, the density of the nether atmosphere kept the bases rooted in distance so dim as to be unsightable. And in front, hidden as yet by the intervening uplands, lay the Montes de Toledo, green above the yellow Tagus.

Along the tree-lined road I tramped in the heat, sweating like a horse. By degrees, as I drew away

## THE FIRST LIFT

from Madrid, the traffic grew less and less until only myself and an occasional old dame on donkeyback remained to eat the dust of the motor-cars that careered madly past at long intervals.

Halting at the seventh kilometre-stone, I was for unhitching my pack before sitting down to rest, when the driver of a hooded mule-cart hailed me in passing and offered me a lift. So, this being the first time since leaving Oviedo that such an offer had been made me, I accepted right gladly and climbed up beside the driver who, with a lazy flick of the whip and a lazier "*Arre, mu-u-u-la!*" urged his lazy beast into the laziest imitation of a trot imaginable.

Of the subsequent ride I remember only offering the driver the makings of a cigarette and our both lighting up, and of gazing out to the sun-baked cornlands gay with poppies that rolled away to the horizon on either hand. For the cart, which was a slight affair consisting of a long deep basket made of pleated straw slung between two wheels and arched over by a split-cane hood, swung about with so soothing a motion that within ten minutes it had cradled me fast asleep. And as I slept I dreamt this :

"Well," said the Cave-man, squatting back on his hams and peering across at me through the curling smoke of the fire which I had lit in the cave-mouth, "since you have called me up out of the Long Ago, what is it you want of me?"

But I could only stare at him in dumb amazement. Never in my wildest, most extravagant imaginings had I presumed to hope that, as its very first all-in try-out, my new televisior would function so incredibly well. Its success seemed too good to be true; it frightened me. I dared scarcely believe that there in the hazy heart of the whirling reflector-

fan, visible to sight and audible to hearing, sat the image of a veritable Cave-man of the Prime.

He was all but naked. A ragged and fire-scorched skin clothed his middle, but so thick grew his fell of hair, especially across the chest and shoulders, that it was difficult to tell where the garment began or left off. His hairy legs were stunted and bow, and his arms long like a gorilla's. His swarthy, bearded face appeared surprisingly human, and the only ape-like qualities I discerned in it were an over-prominence of the bushy eyebrow ridge and a slight hint of muzzle about the mouth. Except for that, the Cave-man differed in no respect from a man of the twentieth century.

Before I could answer him he began speaking aloud as though to himself.

"The cave is the same. Nothing has shifted or altered since they buried me there in the corner, knees to chin and facing the morning. They dared not bury me on the hillside, for the great bears which had hunted and harried us for so long were even then screaming their hate at us from beyond the fire in the cave-mouth. Our fuel was all but finished, and our extermination but a matter of hours. Before I went, I remember looking out there across the valley and thinking that never again would I see the sun-red firing the hilltops or hear in the night-watches the sullen roar of the glacier."

While he continued peering out through the cave-mouth the Cave-man began to show signs of considerable excitement. He waved his arms above him and mouthed and gibbered so incoherently that of all he was saying I could make out only the word "Glacier!" But I understood.

"Yes," I explained, "your glacier disappeared ages ago. Ten miles long and three-quarters of a mile deep, it filled the valley. If you look closely

at the opposite hillside you will see the parallel lines and scratches which it left behind on the rock face."

Whether or not the Cave-man understood my explanation I did not see, but he calmed down, and after staring reflectively into the fire resumed his narrative.

"It was hard to die. In those old days, if life was short and hard it was also sweet—as sweet as marrow from the splintered bone. But mine was a man's death; the bears gave it me. With their red-brown coats, their small snake-like heads, and their murderous claws, those cave-bears were the bane of our existence. We were continually at war with them, and they with us. We trapped them, smoked them stupid, and stoned them dead. But always they took bloody toll of us. A wounded cave-bear brought to bay and erect on its hind legs is the savagest adversary man can meet. That lightning, sideways-clawing stroke of its paws neither misses nor fails. I know. I died that way. . . .

"Never shall I forget those terrifying night-watches of the winter time. Sometimes the wolves grew so bold as to leap through the fires guarding the cave-mouth. And outside! The long-haired trumpeter blared and bellowed till the rocks rang again; stampeding herds of bison and reindeer would thunder down the valley-road in their hundreds; eternally the long-drawn-out howl of the wolves arose and died away in the wildwood, and dreadful shapes and eyes forever watched and waited beyond the fire-glow. Ay, a hard life was ours, and a perilous."

"But the world has changed greatly since those days," I broke in, "and the face of the earth is not what it was—nor man."

But as I uttered these words the reflector-fan began to revolve less swiftly and the image of the



Cave-man to break up till only the head remained. He was speaking again.

"The glacier is gone. In the valley are bare places where forests grew. The face of the earth has certainly changed. While, as for man—" Here the image dwindled still more, so that only the bearded lips were visible. "—as for man, he also has changed."

The lips widened into a long, mocking grin, curled wickedly at the corners—and vanished.

I woke up on the cessation of movement and the commencement of noise—harsh, intermittent, droning noise. Looking out I saw we were halted halfway along a narrow village street in which were cafés with people, mostly soldiers, sitting at tables beneath coloured awnings. I caught sight, too, of armed sentries patrolling outside a place.

"Where are we?" I asked the driver.

"This is Getafe," he explained, adding, "You have been asleep for the last six kilometres, *señor*."

"And what noise is that?"

"An aeroplane. Getafe is an airport. . . . *Adiós, señor*. I turn off here."

"But what's going on?" I persisted. "Why the soldiers? Has anything happened? Is something going to happen?"

The driver shook his head and grinned. Lazily geeing-up the mule, he only said, repeating the formula that was so true of Spain despite murders in Madrid and bombings in Barcelona: "*Aquí no pasa nada*."

And I, as I left Getafe behind and fared along the tree-lined road into the south, kept on saying the same—"Here nothing happens"—until a strangeness about myself, an incompleteness, a feeling of being not as I had been, made me halt and take

## LOSS OF A LEG

stock. And then I discovered that I was short of a leg.

My best leg, too. The leg which I had leant on most when climbing the Cantabrians, and put forward oftenest when crossing the plains of Leon and Old Castile, and entrusted my very life to when traversing the snow-blocked pass of Navacerrada in the high Guadarramas.

What a vexatious loss ! What a truly lamentable oversight ! To go and leave a leg, albeit a wooden one, in the bottom of a mule-cart, and—Oh, well, I would just have to hobble along as best I could on the two remaining legs. Though when one has tramped hundreds of miles, stick in hand—for, as you have guessed, the mislaid limb was my stick—the loss of it is a minor catastrophe. Because a tramp's stick becomes, through usage, a part of the tramp : a limb with as sensitive nerves as a flesh-and-blood member, a feeler, an antenna, better far than any leg in that it never tires, never pulses with pain, never develops blisters, besides never needing to be washed, pedicured, clouted, booted, or trousered.

Stickless, then, I put my next best foot forward. Under me the road burned. Over me the sky blazed. On either hand the ploughed plain gave off a smell of baked earth that parched and stifled with its extreme dryness.

As I padded laboriously along I became aware of a novel feature in the landscape. This was circular clumps of trees, like islands, or oases rather, dotting the plain as far as eye could see. And within each clump a mule, sometimes a donkey, was walking round and round to the accompaniment of metallic creaking and liquid gurgling—for in the still air sounds carried far. And, never having seen the like before, my curiosity was aroused so that I left the

road and approached the nearest of these mysterious isles to investigate.

What I found was that contrivance the principle whereof is as ancient as Old Nilus. I mean the Moorish *noria*, or water-wheel.

A circular embankment, crater-like in appearance, planted with trees and with a walk-way along the top, had been thrown up around the deep well; while from the top of this well, geared so as to work an endless chain of dredger-buckets that descended into the depths, a long pliant beam projected over to the walk-way, its forked end attached fore and aft to a blindfolded mule, which, by merely walking, supplied the motive power necessary to rotate the endless chain. And as bucket after brimming bucket reached the top of the wheel at the well-head, and tilted over, the water was discharged into a conduit leading down to an adjacent reservoir, whose overflow in turn escaped down another conduit into the first of an extensive and intricate system of gutters, and so irrigated the surrounding fields.

The simplicity and ingenuity of such an arrangement made the mighty Aqueduct at Segovia look like some absurd contraption planned by Heath Robinson. It served also as an object lesson. For where the brawny Roman accomplished his purpose only by brute force and after herculean toil, the subtle Moor achieved the same end merely by bridling thought and harnessing science.

Continuing my way, I eventually arrived at the little village of Parla. Noon struck as I entered the place, so I hunted about until I unearthed a fonda of sorts. But although the old woman who managed this hostelry assured me that she could supply me with a meal, I had first to pay her the one-and-thruppence she demanded, then wait half an hour

## GREAT SNAKES!

while she went out and bought the eggs, meat, bread, and milk which I had ordered. Then another half-hour elapsed before the meal was cooked and served. And throughout the meal the old woman, her old father, and her little crippled grandson, sat in silence side by side on chairs along the wall, watching intently my every bite. And on departing from the fonda I looked back—and saw that the three had pounced on the broken viands remaining from the meal and were devouring these with almost bestial voracity.

In Spain there is terrible poverty among the peasants, as there always has been, and probably always will be.

Back on the blistering white-hot road I jogged onward through the dust, on the look-out for a place where I could pass the siesta hours. The green oases, though still dotting the plain, lay too far off to serve, and only tantalised me with their cool shadiness and liquescent babbling. The white flash of the waters, too, as they fell sparkling from the dripping buckets, aggravated my already raging thirst to maddening point, as did likewise the many dried-up streams that meandered forlornly through the plain.

At length I came upon a bridge spanning a water-course that had pools in it. So here I halted and bathed and basked on the sands, watching and listening to the big frogs that infested that place. And as I lay naked in the sun I fell asleep and dreamt that I was lying naked on a desert shore when a snake came and bit me; whereat I wakened with a shout, and, springing to my feet, saw the selfsame snake I had seen in my dream disappear into a nearby thicket.

My flesh crept at so close a call. In a frenzy of loathing I got matches and set light to the thicket, standing by with a big stone ready to smash the guts

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

out of that beast of a reptile as soon as the smoke and flames drove it into the open. But picture my panic when, instead of just one snake coming out, a whole snakery of snakes came pouring forth, slithering and coiling pellmell over and between my bare feet in a writhing tangle of heads and tails. . . .

Two minutes, I think, was all it took me to dress and make my get-away. —Cold feet? Cold feet! Actually as well as figuratively. The chill of those scaly coils numbed my tootsies for kilometres thereafter and piled up material for nightmares for bedtimes to come.

Some distance later I passed where three road-menders were dining by the wayside, and who, like true Spaniards, invited me to join them and partake; on which, noting that the provend would hardly bear being shared by a fourth, I begged them to excuse me, adding, however, that a little of their wine would be acceptable.

"*Hombres*," said I then, on receiving a brimming cupful, "let us drink a great toast."

"Yes, yes," agreed the three, "let us drink a great toast!"

"Let us drink," I went on, "a toast that is never drunk. A toast to the undying glory of the authentic heroes of the Great War, on whom no medals were pinned and to whose memory no memorial has been raised: the noblest of the noble, the bravest of the brave—the Conshies!"

"The Conshies!"

We toasted them.

"But, *señor*," one of three then asked, "who were the Conshies?"

"The Conshies," I told him, "were the valiant. Theirs was the higher courage. They fought the good fight and they kept the faith. When the great Christian Powers of Civilisation were each and all

## AN ARMY OF ANTS

putting their thumbs to their noses and making obscene noises at Christ and Christianity, the Conshies alone kept their head and their heart, standing fast by their beliefs. For not to stampede when the herd stampedes is to be a man, a very brave man, and not a cowardly animal. So all honour to the Conshies and their fellowhood of the little white feather—the White Badge of Fearlessness ! . . . Am I still in Madrid province, *señores* ? ”

“ *Si, señor.* But where the road rises to fall, yonder by the big tree, there Toledo province begins. *Adiós, señor.* Go with God.”

“ Abide with God, *señores.* *Adiós !* ”

Away I went, and where the road rose to fall, by a big tree, I saw where a broad black line about a foot wide, glistening as if newly painted, spanned the roadway ; evidently the boundary line. But as I approached, curious to inspect this most unusual thing—boundary lines being generally only imaginary lines—I discovered that its unusualness bordered on the unnatural, on the uncanny. For the broad black line didn't only glisten ; it moved. Instead of being merely a line that marked the march, as I had supposed, it was a line that marked time and was marching !

In brief, it wasn't a boundary line, but a stream, a procession, a vast army of swarming black ants crossing and recrossing the road.

All of a foot wide, and the breadth of the highway long, this living belt was divided lengthwise in two : one half going, the other coming. And while the ants composing the first half went burdenless, those composing the second half came tottering along under loads, many times bigger and heavier than themselves, consisting for the most part of pieces of withered leaves and bits of decayed twigs. Also, stationed at regular intervals along the line of

demarkation, were to be observed watcher-ants who, when some ant strayed into the opposite traffic stream, chased the jay-walker back again like any traffic cop.

Happening to look up from the observation of these wonders, I caught sight of a motor-lorry approaching in the distance ; whereupon, in a panic of apprehension, I sought to shoo the ant army off the road. But it would not be shooed. I stood aside, therefore, and awaited resignedly the advent of the Juggernaut.

Nearer and nearer it came, recklessly speeding. The slaughter, I thought, would be frightful. Thousands of ants, I imagined, must perish. Their doom seemed inevitable.

But I was counting my corpses before they were run over. Actually not a single ant came to grief. Instinct, or probably the mere rumbling of the oncoming lorry, warned them in time ; and they parted like the waters of the Red Sea, swarming about the road edges until the lorry was gone past, when they closed in and resumed their marching and counter-marching.

Looking down on that ant thoroughfare was exactly like looking down on a busy city artery from a skyscraper. It recalled the view one gets of Paris from the top of the Eiffel Tower.

Ever been up the Eiffel Tower ? Well, you go up in a hoist, or, as the *Guilmin Guide* puts it, " one accedes to the top by lifts." And the platform at the summit is a spacious affair, completely glassed in, with little shops where you can buy post-cards and souvenirs, and a bloke who'll cut you your silhouette in three minutes. And there you can walk right round ; while the view you get of Paris, north, south, east, and west, is sensational.

Immediately below lies the Champ de Mars, which,

## SIGHTS OF PARIS

as the afore-mentioned *Guide* informs you in its quaint and often misspelt and misprinted English, "is a large rectangular surface, in the end of which stays the Tour Eiffel, couverted, since twenty years, into an english garden," where "at night, during the beautiful moonlights, its charm is quite romantic ; it is therefore very visited by dreamers and poets." Then across the silver-curving Seine with its many bridges, behind the Trocadéro, you spy the green expanse of the Bois de Boulogne and its twin lakes "separated by a picturesque mass of rocks from which pour out cheerful waterfalls ;" also the Colonne Vendôme is seen towering above the Place Vendôme, where once upon a time stood an equestrian statue so big that "twenty men sitting on two lines around a table could have been at ease in the horse's stomach." And as your gaze travels eastward it takes in, in turn, such sights as the Louvre, "where in proportion to numerous changes brought into the collections, situation, it is difficult, if not impossible, to exactly indicate their very place ;" St Eustache Church, "which contains a high class choristers ;" the Bourse—"no profane may come here ;" the Hôtel de Ville, which "evokes so many tragic souvenirs ;" the Ile de la Cité, "whose fate was to become the capital city of France ;" with Notre Dame, "one of the seven modern world's marvels, begun in about 1163 and only achieved two hundred ears later ;" the Hôtel des Monnaies, where "the monetary museum contains samples of all coins struck in France since par off times ;" the Luxembourg, "the world's beautifullest garden ;" the Panthéon with its "scarce and mysterious daylight ;" the Arène de Lutèce, whose amphitheatre was formerly large enough for "16,000 sat down people ;" and the Jardin des Plantes, "one of the most appreciated gardens of the parisian population,



## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

who can there look at the *rarest and most terrible animals*, and laugh at the monkey's faces."

Where the road rose to fall, by the big tree, the far-off Guadarramas in the north and the Montes de Toledo in the south were both visible. Taking a last farewell look at the snow-capped sierras, therefore, then facing about toward the green mountains, I shook the dust of Madrid province from off my feet and fared forward on Toledan soil.

## LAP THE FOURTEENTH

### INTO TOLEDO AND OUT

Arrival at Illescas—Talking like an Englishman—The road again—Cabañas de la Sagra—Frugal fare—Wamba's town—Entering Toledo—The Plaza de Zocodover—A registration form—Stay in Toledo—Departure—Ajofrin—At a bad hour—Bedlam in a kitchen—The worm who turned—A freakish throwback.

AT SUNSET, following an uneventful afternoon's journeying in enervating heat across arid plainlands, I arrived at Illescas: the village, you may remember, where Scipio, servant to Gil Blas, supped off a fricassee of tame cat in the belief that it was wild hare.

Here were cafés and ventas and fondas and posadas and paradores galore, but all turned me away. None wanted truck with a foreigner on foot: a blond foreigner with pack on back, therefore a German, therefore unable to pay. For the Spanish peasant takes all foreign footfarers for down-and-out Germans, just as he takes all train-travelling tourists for wealthy Frenchmen.

"But I'm not a German!" I protested to the umpteenth ventero. "I am an Englishman. And I can pay. I am putrid with pesetas!"

To have told him I was a Scotsman would have left him as unenlightened as ever, because to most Spaniards of the lower orders Scotland is merely a name, if even that.

"Wait, then," the ventero said, and going through to the patio where a Guardia Civil was paying court to a daughter of the house, he presently returned with the cock-hatted cop in tow.

"This gentleman," I was told, "has been to

Cadiz and Gibraltar. He has heard English spoken, and knows how it sounds. So please say something in that language."

A tall order: to ask a Scotsman to talk like an Englishman! However, one could try.

"Sir," I said, addressing the Guardia, "this English that I am now speaking is the English spoken in North Britain, in an obscure part called Scotland, which is a country without either language or government of its own. —A shameful confession to have to make about the land of one's birth, sir, don't you think?"

The ventero looked at the Guardia, who looked puzzled.

"Is that English?" the one asked the other.

"The words are certainly English. I recognise some of them. But the accent——"

"Me deah chep," I interrupted, giving tongue to the cultured speech of a university-educated English gentleman, "you positivelay boah meh. I em an Englishmen, I assuah you. Quait. 'Ow can you daowt meh, a strangah? It's bed fawm, me good men, extremelay bed fawm. Remembah: accent, w'ich is pewlay a mattah faw——"

"*Basta, señor!*" broke in the Guardia, his face beaming. "Enough! You need not say another word more. The English accent is one which requires to be heard only once to be remembered ever after. I am well satisfied you are an Englishman. A thousand pardons for doubting you! The ventero, I know, will be honoured to have you as his guest."

The ventero was. His wife and nine of a family were, too. And although for a full hour thereafter, until supper-time, all of them held aloof and ignored me in the considerate manner customary with Spanish hosts, yet after supper, when we retired to the patio, they couldn't make enough of me. And when I had lent the ventero a hand at grappling for

lost buckets in the well, and assisted the señora in separating her youngest child from a chamber-pot in which the little one's bottom had got stuck, I felt I had known the family all the days of my life.

At bedtime, amid a chorus of *hasta mañanas*, I retired reluctantly to my room: a tiny upstairs chamber as hot as an oven, ventilated by one very small window devoid of glass; as a consequence of sleeping under which, fanned by a chill night breeze, I rose next morning with a heavy running cold.

But if one catches cold readily in Spain, one is as readily relieved of it. I had removed myself hardly a hundred yards from the venta when my attack of the sniffers levanted before the fierce counter-attack of the sun's calories, and I quitted Illescas as fit as I had entered it.

Passing where a laughing, gossiping gang of housewives were already busy washing clothes in a communal wash-trough by the wayside, I resumed my route. Along the switchbacking road I drifted in the dust and heat, blood simmering, skin scorching, leaking sweat at every pore. And each time I sat down to rest, which I did often, a huge covered van drawn by three mules would slowly pass. And the old man who sat at the rear, he would look at me as one looks at a piece of dirt, while I would look at him as one piece of dirt looks at another. And each time that I resumed the road I would have that man's contemptuous gaze upon me all the while, until by slow degrees I overtook the van and went on ahead to the next rest, when the van would overtake me in turn and the duel betwixt optics would be renewed. And all day, over five mortal Spanish leagues, or twenty English miles, right into Toledo in fact, this farce was to continue. Believe me, what Sinbad the Sailor felt for his Old Man of the Sea was passionate love compared with what I felt for my old man of the van!

In the course of the morning an adobe village came along, and I entered a café and asked to be served with a cup of coffee. But the fellow who kept the place chose, for some unaccountable reason, to regard this in the nature of a slur upon the establishment ; for with an angry "*No ! Qué no !*" he waved me away, and stood looking after me with a blaze in his eyes that seemed to cry, " The ignorance of you foreigners ! What the devil do you think this café is ? *A café ?* "

At the next village, which stood atop a windy hill and bore the breezy name of Cabañas de la Sagra, I approached a fountain round which a garland of girls was entwined.

" Wait, *señor viajero*," lisped a little barefoot maid, on seeing me endeavouring without much success to drink from the spout. " Drink from this." And she proffered me her freshly filled *cantarillo*, from which I imbibed long and gratefully, the while the words of a French sentence which I was once made to write out a hundred times as a punishment at school, long, long ago, shot through my brain : "*C'est l'eau la plus douce que j'ai jamais goûté de ma vie.*" For it was indeed the sweetest water I had ever tasted in my life.

From Cabañas de la Sagra the road swoops downhill a weary way to a valley bottom, whence it then swoops uphill an even wearier way to an airy eminence on which can be descried against the distant sky the clustered roofs of another village, Olias del Rey.

Down I swung, therefore, into the depths ; and always before me on the road, far ahead like fate, yon cursed old codger in the cart kept looking back at me as one looks back at a piece of dirty work, while I kept looking forward at him as one piece of dirty work looks forward to an infinitely dirtier piece of dirty work. And all about us parched lands

## FRUGAL FARE

hummed and twittered in the noon heat, standing corn rippled and rustled, daisies and poppies dotted the green, moths and butterflies twinkled and flashed, lizards darted, ants and beetles marched in whole armies, and from an almost colourless sky the sun shed its blinding white rays over all.

After many short spells of exertion and innumerable long spells of rest, I eventually attained Olias del Rey.

A miserable, poverty-stricken huddle of hovels this turned out to be, unworthy of so close a proximity to heaven, with narrow, silent lanes ankle-deep in dust, and an insanitary smell. I had the deuce of a job, too, unearthing a place where grub and drink could be got. Mouldy with mazuma though I was, the most I managed to dig up in the way of nourishment was three eggs (fried in rancid oil and served on a rusty tin plate without either knife or fork), a hunk of antediluvian cheese, a loaf of sour bread, and two small bottles of tepid beer ; while, to crown all, the señora who attended me kept suckling her baby all the time I was eating, sitting immediately across the table from me, opening and closing her eyes in the ecstasy of giving milk.

From Olias all the way into Toledo, a distance of some three leagues, you must picture me as plodding down a descending road through featureless countryside under a blistering sun, dogging, when not being dogged by, the old villain in the van, and returning his contemptuous looks with compound interest, whilst derisively chanting to myself this improvised version of Tom Moore's most lachrymose lyric :

“ 'Tis a nasty old bummer  
Left glooming alone ;  
All his ancient companions  
Have kicked the bucket and gone ;

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

No crone of his kidney,  
No Methuselah is nigh,  
So here's as good as he's giving me—  
Here's eye for eye ! ”

Cheek by jowl with a *rambla*, or dried-up river-bed used as a donkey pad, the road at last drew up to Toledo. Through an outlying suburb it then led, past the Bull Ring and the shady Paseo de Madrid, and so round under the crumbling city walls to the picturesque Visagra Gate.

So this was Wamba's town.

On its seven hills above the tawny Tagus, the yellow, sunbaked, silent city—Toledo, the once-imperial, the whilom Crown of Spain and Light of the Whole World, lies festering ; a ruin far gone in decay, smelling of sepulture and cerement and long-dead death. It is Time's own cinerary urn, crammed to overflowing with the accumulated ashes of long-past peoples and cultures. Gothic walls and towers, Roman remains, Moorish gateways and mosques, Jewish synagogues and Christian churches, mediæval palaces and prisons and nunneries and hospitals and asylums and chapels and shrines and colleges and libraries and armouries, housing treasures of art and craftsmanship : priceless paintings, rare books, exquisite gems of ornament and decoration, superb examples of carving and chiselling, holy relics, magnificent architecture—all these, environed and crowded out by tall, gloomy, prison-like houses with tiny grated windows and ponderous studded doors, and lost amid a labyrinthine maze of tortuous cobbled alleys and wynds and lanes and passages scarce wide enough for panniered donkeys to scrape past, and girt withal by a double line of hoary walls and the precipitous screes of a profound mountain gorge—these make up this truly venerable City of Generations.

## ENTERING TOLEDO

For such, it seems, is the meaning of the Hebrew *Toledoth* whence Toledo is thought by some to derive its name. Because it was to this far town on the Tagus, to this uttermost Tarshish, that certain Jews fled for refuge from the persecutions of Nebuchadnezzar when Jerusalem was taken. Anyway, it is as ancient as that. Its beginnings are lost in the mists of ages. Tradition names Hercules as being the original founder. But then tradition's middle name is Ananias ; it ascribes to Hercules the founding of half the cities of Spain. Besides, Toledans assert (1) that Toledo was already a greybeard among cities when Hercules was still strangling snakes in his cradle, (2) that the newly created sun was placed in the sky solely to shine upon Toledo, and (3) that Adam was the first Toledan. Which last assertion is intolerable. Everybody knows that Adam wasn't a Spaniard.—No, he spoke Gaelic, and was the first MacPherson !

Above the Visagra Gate I saw a notice in Spanish which read : “ In this city begging and blasphemy are prohibited.” But immediately on my passing through and entering the city, a wild-eyed ragamuffin gave the lie to that statement in a single breath. Springing at me, he cried, “ Alms, *señor*—for God's sake ! ”

Nor was he my only accoster. All the devious way up from the entrance gate to the Plaza de Zocodover other pests kept attacking me. Now it was a beggar-boy or beggar-woman, again a hanker after English cigarettes, or a would-be guide. And this last nuisance was the hardest to beat off. They wouldn't take no, these tourist-tormentors. They sought to tire me out and convert my resistance into acceptance of their services by conjugating in all its moods, tenses, and deflexions the verb ‘ to do ’ as governing Toledo's sights. They endeavoured to lasso me into their clutches by casting round me a noose of such names as El Puente de Alcántara,



La Puerta del Sol, El Cristo de la Luz, San Martin, Santo Tomé, El Transito, San Juan de los Reyes, the Alcazar, the Cathedral, the Fábrica de Armas. But I cursed them for cadgers and they decamped discomfited.

The pavements of the Plaza de Zocodover were crowded with idlers sitting gossiping and drinking and smoking at café tables under coloured awnings. Ordering coffee I sat down amongst them. Most of the faces I beheld were typical Spanish faces : long, rugged, melancholy, the colour of old parchment, carried with pride, the eyes glinting and piercing like rapiers. The speech spoken was *Toledano*, which is Castilian in its purest form : unhurried, dignified, sonorous, every syllable clearly enunciated ; not the gabbled dog-Latin that masquerades as Spanish over too great a portion of the Peninsula.

This square of Zocodover is the heart of Toledo, being the principal rendezvous of the inhabitants. In the past, bull-fights used often to be staged here, likewise *autos da fé* ; for it was the *quemadero*, or burning-place, of the Inquisition, when that unholy tribunal disgraced Toledo with its presence. Readers of Le Sage will recall an occasion when, in the procession of victims destined for burnt-offering in this place, Gil Blas was horrified to recognise his former partners in pulchritude, those incorrigible scallywags, Father Hilary and Brother Ambrose, *alias* Don Raphael and Ambrose de Lamela.

Cervantes has described the Zocodover, with the Don Desperadoes who were wont to frequent it, more than once. Toledo he knew well. Nay, it was in the Alcaná at Toledo, he tells us with his tongue in his cheek, that he one day saw a young lad offer to sell to a shopkeeper a parcel of old papers written in Arabic, and how, on laying hands on the manuscript and securing the services of an interpreter, he discovered it to be the work of an Arabian sage,

## A REGISTRATION FORM

one Cid Hamet Benengeli, entitled: "The History of Don Quixote de La Mancha."

Finishing my coffee I pushed on up the Calle del Comercio, passing on the way more soldiers and Shock Police and Civil Guards than civilians. Indeed, the town was simply lousy with morons—I mean armed men in uniform. And at the top I came out upon the great Gothic Cathedral, most perfect and most magnificent of its kind in all Spain. . . . And at a late hour I returned to the Zocodover, where I put up at the Hotel Imperial.

As at all big Spanish hotels, I was here presented with a registration form to fill in. And since I am describing the griefs as well as the joys of foreign travel anyway, here is the thing in all its nauseating nakedness:

### HOTEL IMPERIAL

*Capitanes Galan y Garcia Hernandez, 7*

—O—

*Viajero llegado a dicho Hotel en el dia de la fecha :*

*Apellidos*.....  
*Nombre* .....  
*Edad* .....  
*Nacionalidad* .....  
*Natural de*.....*Provincia de*.....  
*Vecino de*.....*Provincia de* .....  
*Profesion* .....  
*Procedencia* .....  
*Cédula o pasaporte* <sup>1</sup> .....  
.....  
*Menores de catorce años que le acompañan :* ..  
.....  
*Observaciones :* .....  
.....  
*Toledo*.....*de*.....*de* 193 .....  
*El Viajero* .....

*Este viajero sale el dia*.....*de*.....*de* 193....., *manifestando que va a* .....

<sup>1</sup> *Resenanse estos documentos.*

But that's nothing. In an hotel I stayed at in Paris I had to fill in two such ridiculousities—a white one *and* a blue one !

It's just a lot of red-taped rot, that's what, this registration caper. Heaven knows what fatheaded purpose it is supposed to serve. Personally I make it a practice to supply false and highly coloured information about myself, always, invariably, world without end. And nothing ever happens : no police visitation, investigation, denunciation, incarceration, or penalisation—nothing. But let us not say anything further against the thing. After all, it benefits printers and papermakers.

My room in the hotel was a cool well of a chamber overlooking the patio, with dungeon-like doors nearly six inches thick, floor laid with tiles, walls tinted a restful green. To retire here during the burning day-hours was like retiring to a woodland bower or the depths of a lagoon. To sit with my feet bare and let the cold tiles draw the heat out of them—oh, man !

Indeed, all the time of my stay in Toledo, which was a night, a day, and another night, I fancy I did more retiring and sitting than anything else. For the incandescent daylight was blinding, the sun's heat melting, and to walk abroad anything but pleasurable. Still, I saw everything worth seeing, from the savage gorge of the Tagus with its old-world bridges of San Martin and Alcántara to the dust-devils dancing across the Vega and the damascene work and the swords for which Toledo has been renowned for the past 2000 years. Also, I saw much unworkable plumbing, smelt insufferable stench and stinks, and encountered a dead dog with moss growing on it lying in an alley, and an alarming number of people wearing mourning bands.

On the morning of the second day, after inade-

## DEPARTURE

quately breakfasting on the usual coffee and roll, I paid my hotel bill (it being not unknown for shady undesirables to leave Imperial Hotels *without* paying their hotel bill) and took the road out of Toledo.

I had bought myself a new stick to replace the one left behind in yon mule-cart at Getafe. Only thruppence-ha'penny it cost me, yet it was a sturdy ash stave nearly as high as my head, similar to one I had seen a wandering palmer in Valladolid with. Hence, as I passed out by way of the Sun Gate, where a string of laden asses—and a water-seller, and a bullock team, and a flock of goats attended by a goatherd in goatskins, with his bare legs cross-gartered—were coming in, I felt as mediæval as the devil, if you know what I mean.

Down alongside the city walls and round underneath the Alcazar heights I went to the bridge of Alcántara, which I crossed and so gained the lonely road that twists and twines like a snake through desert valleys and over rock-littered hills towards the Montes de Toledo in the near south.

Traversing these dusty wastes was a heartbreak. The lone lands, haunt of the lizard and the serpent, lay parched and baked beneath the roasting sun, humming and twittering in the heat. There was no shade nor water, but only blinding blaze and suffocating aridity. My lips, as dry as meal, felt and tasted like leather. My tongue was as rough as a rasp. Though I sweated much, yet the sweat evaporated the moment it came in contact with the air, so that my body burned as though fired by fever. And not only my body, but my clothes also. So hot to the touch were they that I feared they would burst into flame any minute. While my feet—my feet felt as if they were footing not a road but a travelling belt of red-hot sandpaper.

The heat, too, had a peculiar quality: it tinted

everything a pale blue colour. Nor by this do I mean that there was a heat haze and that the haze was a bluish haze. There was no heat haze ; never had the air been so limpid, so pellucid, so sparkingly diamond-clear. No, what I mean is that the translucent azure of the skies seemed to have gravitated earthward, flooding the land with its calm cerulean tide, so that I felt as if I were walking over the bed of a blue sea of invisible brine.

It was as though I were wearing blue glasses. Everything I looked at appeared blue, or of a shade of blue : the trees, the grass, the rocks, the lizards, everything ; while my hands, which the sun had tanned to a bright mustard-yellow—these, what of the pervading blueness, now appeared to be green ! It was the strangest thing out.

Slowly the kilometre-stones Indian-filed past, the country grew opener, signs of cultivation showed, a church tower hove in sight, and I overtook and put behind the village it stood in the midst of : Burguillos. Thereafter it was the kilometre-stones again, then the tedious approach to, and passage of, a shallow valley between two low hills whose gentle slopes were planted with olive trees. Then another church tower came into view, and at one o'clock in the afternoon I entered the hamlet it watched over : Ajofrin.

This was a typical *aldeorrio*, or small, unpleasant village. It consisted of a long, hot, constricted main street, and a long, hot, unconstricted main smell. And both street and smell were deserted except for a patriarch in a black skull-cap sunning himself on a chair beside a house door, who told me that the posada was the place to go to if I wanted something to eat.

Thanking the ancient I went along to the hostelry in question, which I entered by the usual fortress-

## AT A BAD HOUR

like gateway, passing in to the usual covered yardway, where I made my presence known by the usual double handclap.

A sonsy lass appeared from a side-room.

"You have come at a bad hour," she replied, on my stating my needs; "at a very bad hour. But if you will wait we will see——"

At that she disappeared, leaving me standing amongst the hanging harness and the strutting cocks and hens and the wooden racks of water-jars, thinking to myself that if Don Quixote ever sought to revisit the glimpses of the moon, he should find the posadas of Spain exactly as they were in the days when he mistook them for castles under enchantment. The timberwork of this one might have been salvaged from Noah's Ark.

Suddenly, while I was about to sample the contents of one of the water-jars, the door of the side-room into which the sonsy lass had disappeared burst open, and the struggling body of an infuriated man was flung out into the yardway. His ejectors, about half a dozen brawny peasant wenches, followed, yanked him to his feet, and, plumping him down on a bench, threatened him with all sorts if he came any more capers. Then the brawniest of the bunch turned to me.

"You have come at a bad hour," she complained; "at a very bad hour. But if you will wait we will see——"

So saying she retired with the others into the side-room, which I saw was the kitchen, leaving me alone with the man on the bench who, though he was quietened down, kept mouthing and muttering to himself and easing his feelings now and again by shouting things in at his ejectors.

Following one of these outbursts another man appeared on the scene. Sitting down beside the

disturber of the peace he sought to reason with him. But the other refused to be reasoned with. Nay, he all of a sudden turned on his would-be comforter and with his clenched fists beat a vicious tattoo on the bloke's face. —Oh, you ought to have seen him. He was entirely beside himself.

Then, the battered one departing in a huff, the sonsy lass came out bearing a little table which she placed in front of me where I sat on the edge of a wheelbarrow with my stockinged feet cooling on the cobbles. And after a bit she served me with a meal consisting of four fried eggs, half a loaf, a generous helping of lettuce salad, and a bottle of white wine.

This, however, was more than the man on the bench could stomach. Throwing me a glance of furious hate he sprang to his feet and dived like a devil into the kitchen. The door banged behind him—and bedlam broke loose. . . . Then the door reopened to disgorge into the yardway a sweating, struggling mass of humanity composed of the kitchen wenches and the man, whom they were ejecting for the second time.

For the second time, too, the lassies plumped their victim down on the bench ; but this time they didn't retire. Like a pack of she-wolves they stood round him, giving him the worst side of their tongues. Yet above the tumult the bloke made himself heard ; and this, in effect, was the gist of his grouse :

“Bust me if I'll wait ! Blast me if I'll wait ! Strike me stone-dead if I'll wait ! I'll see you all in Gehenna first—by God, I will ! You cursed bitches can't make a tin man out of me no more—by heaven, you can't. Blister your skins and hides, but I gotta get grub or I'll bust. That's what. Grub or bust—that's me. Wait, wait, wait—that's all I ever hear. And I can't stand it. I won't stand it. I'm fed up

## THE WORM WHO TURNED

to the blasted eyes with this infernal wait, wait, waiting. By Beelzebub, I am ! It's all I ever hear—wait, wait, wait—all the time, every day. What the horn-toed devil do you take me for ? A worm ? By heaven, yes. A worm. But the worm's turned—see ? The worm's turned and it's gonna get its grub when it blooming well asks for it, or blue blazes'll be to pay—all hell'll be to pop. So gimme my dinner. Gimme my dinner. Gimme my dinner. No, I won't shut up. Gimme my blasted dinner. I've worked for it and I want it—I want it—I want it. Oh-h-h-h-h-h-h, God, I'm going goofy ! Saints, succour me ! This cursed waiting's driving me daft ! And to think that you bitches should have the cheek, the infernal nerve, the hell-fire gall, to serve this queer fella here before me, as soon's he came in. That puts the peter on it. To keep me waiting while you dish up dinner to this stranger, this tramp, this utter bum, this—this—" he gesticulated wildly at me where I sat innocently cooling my tootsies on the cobbles and toying with the four fried eggs, the half loaf, the generous helping of lettuce salad, and the bottle of white wine, " this—this—this German bastard ! "

My heart warmed to him.

That fling at me, however, was his undoing. The lassies pounced on him in a fury and bore him bodily to an outhouse, where they must have locked him in, for until I took my departure my ears were fair deafened by the din of fists and feet hammering and kicking at a shut door.

I repeat, my heart warmed to the worm. He had all my sympathy. I could appreciate how he felt. I, too, had often felt like that. Many had been the times in posada, venta, and hotel, when the long, long hours of waiting for meals had brought me to the verge of gibbering lunacy ; when the lacka-



## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

daisical dilly-dallying of the persons responsible had made me see red and provoked in me the desire to run amuck and butcher like a berserk. Yet, at the same time, for a Spaniard to be brought to such a pass was phenomenal. Because waiting for meals is what the Dons do best and mostly. Patience is their strong point, as the *mañana* habit is their weakness. Procrastination in Spain is a national industry. This rebel in the posada, then, must have been a freakish throwback, an atavistic monstrosity, a rare bird with a cuckoo roosting in his family tree and a bar sinister skeletonising in his ancestral closet. Anyway, it was refreshing to know that there was at least one Spaniard who would be busted if he would wait !

## LAP THE FIFTEENTH

### OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

Towards the Montes de Toledo—In Orgaz—Round the communal bowl—Most uncomfortable inn—The windmills—Into Ybenes—A secret valley—On the threshold of La Mancha—Something to eat—A potty parent—Locked in the stable.

BEYOND Ajofrin the land opened out, cultivated and planted with trees, with *norias* dotting it, and rising in gentle undulations towards the low Toledan hills in the immediate south.

Straight for these last the road now made until, at the village of Sonseca nestling at their foot, it turned at right angles to run eastward for a considerable distance parallel with the foremost hillspur. Then it found a low gap through which it passed, and thence, hugging the south side of the spur now, held eastward for Orgaz.

I reached this village in the early evening. Its low, whitewashed cottages, some with a vine-bower shading the doorway, presented an attractive appearance, gilt as they were with the mellow light of the fast-sinking sun, and clustering as they did about the ruinous walls and keep of the Moorish castle of Orgaz, which reared itself against the deep-blue sky like a tower of gold.

In the congested little Plaza, where half the village was congregated, were two posadas, one of which refused me admittance point-blank, while the other agreed with very bad grace to put me up for the night—after I had exhibited a handful of money

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

and rung the coins on the cobbles to show they were not counterfeit, and after I had induced a suspicious Civil Guard to assure the posadero that my credentials were not forgeries but maybe quite genuine enough.

Instinct warning me that supper would be an hour or two, or three, or maybe four, in showing up, I sallied forth again, and, after snooping around the old castle for a bit, went and sat on a bridge which had actually a river with water in it flowing underneath. And as I sat smoking in the golden light of sunset, there kept passing farm-labourers on donkey-back returning from the fields, all of whom, I noted, wore shoes which consisted of a sole, a toe-cap, a heel-cap, but no upper. . . . And heat and thirst were fast making a monkey out of me.

Then at last the terrible sun set. As it dropped out of sight I could almost feel the earth under me heave and subside in a sigh of unutterable relief ; the while I discovered myself repeating :

“ The sun rises bright in Spain,  
And fair sets he ;  
But he has tint the blythe blink he had  
In my ain countree.”

On my return to the posada an hour or so later I found supper already under way. About a dozen stalwart sons of the soil, redolent of earth and honest sweat, were seated in a ring round an enormous communal bowl occupying the centre of the cobbled yardway : a bowl heaped high with a steaming mess of beans and meat from which the yokels, using hunks of bread in place of spoons, helped themselves with resounding gusto, only pausing now and again to take a hearty swig from a pitcher of water, or, chuckling and guffawing with their

mouths full, slap a messmate on the back in applause for some quip or witticism, so that it did one's heart good to watch and listen to them.

The butt of this bucolic crew was a callow stripling wearing a split-new sun-hat, from the brim of which a price-tag still dangled on its string and whose style and immaculateness stood out in ludicrous contrast to the wearer's toilworn togs and rustic phiz. From the jokes levelled at the lad I learned that he had bought the hat only that evening with money it had taken him months to save, and that, in the opinion of his mates, he had been diddled ; the article not being worth a quarter of the price paid. Finally, on the banter developing into horse-play in which nearly successful efforts were made to knock the hat from his head, the poor butt rose and fled out into the Plaza, where for hours after he was to be seen strutting about as proud as a peacock, his hands deep in his pockets and the posh cadie on the back of his head : the ambition of his young life at last attained.

Meanwhile my supper was being reluctantly laid in a side-room.

As my mouth had often been made to water by reading in works of romantic fiction how the wealthy hero, on putting up at an inn, invariably ordered mine host to put a partridge, or pheasant or other, on the spit, I had had the temerity to do the same, requesting the posadero to pluck me a chicken and to hurry its preparation forward with all dispatch, and in the meantime to bring me a bottle of the best wine in the house.

But, alas ! instead of knuckling his forehead and immediately fussing off with face wreathed in smiles to carry out my behest, as innkeepers in books always do, this host of mine had just stood and gazed at me with contemptuous curiosity.

"A chicken?" he had said with a laugh, as though I had asked for a dodo or an archæopteryx. "Oh, no, you can't have a chicken. Eggs—fried eggs, and maybe some meat, and salad, but no chicken; oh, no. And the only wine in the house is ordinary red wine and white."

So that had been that.

In due course, consequently, I sat down to fried eggs, fried meat, lettuce salad, doughy bread, and alleged juice of the grape—and was uncomfortably aware throughout the meal that the posadero was pointing me out to interested persons as the bloke who had actually asked him to pluck a chicken!

Altogether, this was the most uncomfortable inn I had yet struck. I didn't get a wink of sleep all night. My bedroom overlooked the busy Plaza, and in a café across the way a wireless loudspeaker kept blaring and barking till the last stroke of midnight. Also, a raging thirst consumed me: a thirst there was no quenching. Again and again I visited the water-pitcher until not a drop remained. Then I started on the contents of the washstand ewer, and quickly drained these away. Then I had recourse to the water in the washbowl, dipping my burning face in up to the ears and sucking in yard after liquid yard right down to the last drop. Yet still I thirsted. Wherefore, tiptoeing in my shirt-tail out into the passage, I peeked round the open door of the room next to mine; but this was occupied. The callow stripling, clad only in a singlet, was attitudinising before a mirror with a walking-cane under one arm and his split-new sun-hat stuck at a rakish angle on his head. So I tried a room further along, and, finding it vacant, entered and commandeered the water-pitcher and ewer, which I succeeded in lugging back to my own room undetected, laughing fit to kill myself.

## THE WINDMILLS

Then, between four and five in the morning, when I was just settling down to sleep, lo and behold ! birds began singing, carts began rumbling across the cobbled Plaza, women hawkers began yelling their wares in the lanes, and like winky the entire village was out and about ; so that until eight o'clock, when I got up, I lay turning and tossing in an agony of wide wakefulness, damning the din.

A bowl of coffee and a hunk of dry bread lay in wait for me below, along with a bill for two-and-thruppence . . . and in next to no time I was beating it out of Orgaz.

Straight as an arrow the blazing road sped across a level plain planted with olive and vine, towards a low range of barrier hills. These it took me hot hours of dusty footslogging to reach. On arriving under their green wall I looked aloft and saw how the road climbed up and over, not rising directly to the summit but deviating away across the hillside in a long leisurely slant until half-way up, then turning at an acute angle to complete the ascent in another slant equally long and leisurely. And at the nick in the crest where it went over stood what recalled the most famous of Don Quixote's feats ; a row of three *molinos de viento*, or windmills.

Up and up I toiled in the sweltering heat, the plain falling as I rose, the view becoming wider as I ascended—up and up, round the bend, and thence, with many halts to gaze down upon the far-spreading scene, up and up to the nick in the crest and the windmills.

These last weren't much ; not what you see in Holland. They impressed me as being extremely young and inexperienced windmills. In shape they were pepperbox-like, and their towers reached no higher than the height of two men and maybe a wee fella.

I sat down in their shadow and shared the hilltop breezes with them.

They were deserted and tumbledown and only one had all its arms, and the song their sails made was a sad and solemn song : a song that seemed to be a sigh for things far off and long ago ; like the voice of memory mourning lost and irrevocable youth—the same as haunts the whorls of a seashell. And recently, while sitting under the big windmill that towers above the busy Oostplein at the end of the Hoogstraat in Rotterdam, that same voice and that same song came down to me through the traffic's hum, whispering like these on their desert hilltop :

“ I remember the gleams and glooms that dart  
 Across the schoolboy's brain ;  
 The song and the silence in the heart  
 That in part are prophecies, and in part  
 Are longings wild and vain.  
 And the voice of that fitful song  
 Sings on and is never still :  
 ‘ A boy's will is the wind's will  
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.’ ”

From the nick in the crest a wide valley-plain, like that which I had climbed from, met my gaze. Green hills bounded it on every side, and it was chequer-boarded with cornlands and olive groves and fields of vine : a veritable Vale of Tempe.

Downwards over the parched hillface I dropped with the steeply zigzagging road towards the bottom, where the whitewashed cottages of the little village of Ybenes, close clustered, appeared like a sheet spread out on a bleaching green.

It being near noon when I eventually won down to this place, and as I had decided after much cogitation to let the local posada keep its fried eggs and dry bread and vile wine for travellers who

had not yet had their bellyful of such fare, I entered a shop on the straggling main street and laid in a supply of apples, oranges, bananas, peaches, pears, little sugar cakes, and a couple of bottles of lemon-coloured wetness ; which I then carted along to a shady spot beside the road beyond Ybenes, and so dined *al fresco*.

Following a smoke and a short siesta I languidly resumed my way, heading straight for the blue range of hills that walled the valley-plain on its southern edge.

The sun burned, the road burned, I burned, everything burned. Bush and tree quivered in the fierce blue heat. The continuous hum of teeming insect life was as a gong endlessly vibrating. Wild-flowers in profusion and of every colour carpeted the meadowlands and spiced the air with aromatic fragrance. In the cornfields and vineyards and olive groves not a living soul was in evidence. It was that hour when wise men rest indoors and only fools are abroad.

Time wore on and by easy stages I gradually diminished the distance between me and the barrier mountains. At first I could discern no break or gap in their green wall, nor any place where the road climbed up and over. But ere long the narrow mouth of a secret valley hidden among trees slowly made itself manifest, opening out as I drew near to reveal a long constricted pass wandering away into the heart of the hills. And here, through openings in the trees, I caught heart-gladdening glimpses of levels of shining water, and of green ponds where water-lilies grew ; so that the next hour or two saw me diving and plunging in deep places and basking amphibiously in shallows, the heat forgetting, by the heat forgot.

Thereafter, mightily refreshed, I pursued the pass.



Into an open valley it led along the riverside, then, narrowing again where the romantic ruin of a Moorish keep towered above the defile, it ushered me into a spacious strath between high hills with great white-walled farmsteads standing far apart in the midst of parklands ; and down the length of this strath the road ran southward to more mountains.

These mountains I reached in the evening. Up their broad sloping bases, which were clothed in the low grey-green cistus bush, the way toiled skyward to the elevated pass that winds for leagues through highland solitudes and conducts the traveller out of Toledo province into that of Ciudad Real.

Upward I climbed in the darkening light, wondering where night would find me. All about on the braes sheep and goats bleated plaintively, cattle-bells tolled funereally, and the lonely cry of the hoopoe bird rose and died away like the moan of a wandered soul. Yet, dismal as were my surroundings, my thoughts were far otherwise. My mind was questing along that other pass barely twenty miles to the eastward—questing along the Pass of Lapiche, where it was that He of the Rueful Countenance assured Sancho Panza that there they could wanton and thrust their arms up to the very elbows in adventures, and where the same doleful knight routed the two monks of St. Benedict, and waylaid the coach of the Biscayan lady whom he mistook for a kidnapped princess, and vanquished her gentleman-usher, the Biscainer, and lost the pasteboard visor to his helmet and half an ear.

For you are to know that I was now nearing Don Quixote Land. Yes, I was now treading the threshold of La Mancha.

By nightfall I was fairly in the heights, speeding along a lonely glen towards a far light that took an unconscionable time a-coming to, it appearing to

recede as fast as I advanced. I caught up with it at length, however, to find that it proceeded from the midst of some thatched huts huddled by the wayside, where a number of peasant women were standing talking to a man on horseback who was smoking a white-paper cigar.

"*Señoras y caballero*," I called, more as a passing greeting than anything else, for the wretched appearance of the huts quashed any hope of there being harbourage—" *Señoras y caballero, hay venta o posada aquí ?* "

" *Si, señor*," one of the women called back, much to my surprise and joy. " Yes, sir, there is a posada here. —Come this way."

The place to which this woman conducted me, though, was not a proper posada, but her own home : an ancient stone dwelling with thatched roof and one tiny window, and a doorway so low that I had to stoop to enter. It reminded me vividly of Jean MacAlpine's Inn at Aberfoyle. And the light of a *mariposa*, or rushlight, which burned smokily in the interior, revealed bare rafters overhead, a bare earthen floor underfoot, a rickety wooden bench along one wall, an old geezer in a corner, and very little else. I have slept in derelict bothies in the Scottish Highlands that were palaces compared with this.

" Can I have something to eat, *señora ?* " I asked the woman of the house, with some hesitation, the stark staring poverty of the place daunting me.

" Yes, certainly, *señor*. What would you like ? "

I cursed inwardly, and prepared myself for the worst. I had heard that " What would you like ? " too often not to know what it signified.

" I—I would like—I would like *huevos, señora—huevos fritos, pan y bino*. Can I have that ? "

"Assuredly, *señor*! Most assuredly. Right away. —You like *huevos fritos* very much, yes?"

"I've eaten hardly anything else since coming to Spain!"

"Then you are a foreigner?"

"British."

"Ah. —*Señor*, in British, what is *huevos fritos*, *pan y bino*?"

"In British, *señora*, *bino* is wine—cursed wine! *Pan* is bread—blasted bread! And *huevos fritos*—*huevos fritos* is eggs fried and bedamned!"

"So? Well, I am glad you like them, *señor*, for, to tell you the truth, I have got nothing else in the house."

To which I replied, under my breath: "You're telling *me*!"

While I sat smoking on the rickety bench along the wall, the woman got ready the meal. First she arranged a handful of twigs on the cold hearth, and placed over them a three-legged frying pan with fat in it. Next, setting fire to the twigs, she waited until their crackling blaze had melted the fat in the pan, then broke three eggs into it; and while these were frying she set before me a low stool laid with a tin plate, a knife, a napkin, a loaf of concrete-cruste*d* peasant bread, and a half-bottle of red wine.

All this time the old geezer in the corner, who was the woman's father, had been steadily waving a handkerchief up and down in front of his face, and repeating at intervals: "*Ay de mí, señor! Ay de mí!*" All through the meal, too, he kept this up. And the daughter, seeing me look wonderingly at her parent from time to time, at last explained. Tapping her temple significantly, she formed her lips into an O and soundlessly breathed out a word of two syllables, which she had to repeat thrice before I understood.

## LOCKED IN THE STABLE

“ *Loco!* ”

I nearly burst. It took me all I knew to choke back the sudden laughter that welled in my throat. I thanked heaven for napkins as I hid my face behind mine. For while *loco* is good Spanish for ‘crazy,’ it is also good slangy English for ‘daft,’ so that its effect on me was the same as though the woman had in all seriousness and solemnity informed me that her father was—cuckoo!

After supper I was shown into an adjoining out-house where an ass and a mule were stabled, and a stone trough spread with an old horse-blanket and several corn-sacks was pointed out as my bed. Then the hostess, lighting a lantern that hung from the rafters, bade me good-night and turned the key in the door, leaving me a prisoner until morning.

## LAP THE SIXTEENTH

### ACROSS LA MANCHA

A dram at dawn—Rain at sunrise—The barber of Malagon—  
In Fernancaballero—The mirage that wasn't—At the gate of  
Ciudad Real—Charge of the shoeshine brigade—A drowsy  
dorp—Dirty work at Almagro—Accepting the inevitable—  
Night-march to Valdepeñas — In Don Quixote Land—  
Towards the sierras.

I SLEPT like a log all night, not waking once. In spite of the ass and the mule and the stone bed and the smelly blanket and the locked door and the crazy old geezer and the loneliness and wildness of the place, where I could have been murdered for my money and nobody have ever known, I slept like a doss adept, getting in as much sleep as more than made up for what I had lost the night before in Orgaz.

At dawn the grating of the key in the door roused me. It was the woman, with a basin of ice-cold water and towel and soap. So I washed, then went round to where a bowl of coffee and milk and half a loaf waited me in the hut. And, as I sat breakfasting, there came in three field labourers, clamouring for a morning dram. Mere boys they were, bursting with red-blooded health, their hair full of straw; as ragged as scarecrows, and wearing sections of motor tyre in place of shoes. And for a ha'penny apiece the woman measured out to them a thimbleful of bitter, biting aguardiente, which they tossed off at one gulp without batting an eye. Then after skylarking for a bit, and shouting in greetings to the old

geezer who was sitting up in bed steadily waving his handkerchief up and down in front of his face and endlessly repeating "*Ay de mí, señores! Ay de mí!*" they leapfrogged out to their waiting wain and gaily rode off into the morning.

Breakfast finished, I asked the woman what I owed her. In fear and trembling, knowing that she was grossly overcharging me, she said I owed her two pesetas, which in English money is equivalent to a shilling. But such a charge for one night's board and lodging was preposterous. Looking, therefore, into her eyes to let her know I was wise to her game, I pressed into her hand a big, thick, heavy, silver Spanish crown piece, and hastily departed.

So early was it still that the sun had not yet risen. In the chill greyness, through a fine rain that pearly my coat but did not wet me, I heeled and toed it along the lonely road, the bordering hills lessening in height as I progressed, and the glen widening into a cultivated valley through which a stream meandered.

Sunrise brought with it rain so heavy that for a couple of hours I had to shelter underneath a bridge. Then the weather fined, the clouds dissolved all away, the sun blazed from the blue, and thenceforward heat and dust and sweat were my travelling companions.

Fuente el Fresno was the first village I came to. It lay upon the slope of a green hill like a field of cotton, its whitewashed walls dazzling unbearably in the sunlight. I heard eight o'clock strike from its chapel tower, so didn't halt, but held on through the smiling countryside past rippling cornlands and murmuring streams and tree-shaded draw-wells, following the line of a gracefully moulded range of olive-clad hills that ran, diminishing in height and

finally petering out, across what was now a wide, cultivated, populous plain. And behind in the north the mountains of yesterday veiled their heads and wept.

Malagon and Fernancaballero were the next two places to show up. Long, bright villages both, lazy and sundrenched, surrounded by olive groves and vineyards, with gaily coloured awnings shading the sidewalks and cool green patios flowering behind whitewashed walls—ah, now was I at last; come into the authentic South !

In Malagon I stopped at a *peluquería* for a shave, and while he groomed my jaws the barber gave me word of a German vagabundo who had passed through the village the day before, on his way round the world. And he asked me, the barber did, if I was that German bloke's brother, and I said yes, that I was his brother, that we were both walking round the world for a wager, but that a sore foot had made me lag behind.

"Well, *señor*," replied the barber, "I am exceedingly delighted to learn that you are the German vagabundo's brother—also much relieved."

"How's that ?"

"Oh, it's quite simple. Yesterday, *señor*, your brother told me to keep a sharp look-out for you to-day, as you would surely pass ; also that you would pay."

"Pay ? Pay for what ?"

"Pay for the shave and haircut, of course."

"What shave and haircut ?"

"Your brother's shave and haircut, *señor*."

"You—you mean he got a shave and haircut, and—and didn't pay ?"

"Yes. He explained that it was you who carried the purse and defrayed all expenses."

"The devil he did !"

However, I paid up : the joke being decidedly on me. The few extra centimos it cost me were, I considered, not ill-spent. I would travel far before coming across another human being possessed of so touching a belief in human nature as this barber of Malagon. Just the same, I made my way from the village by a back way, cursing all vagabonds who told lies. I did not know but what there might be other establishments at which that ' brother ' of mine had run up more and bigger bills !

In Fernancaballero I had the dickens of a job rustling up a midday meal. The keepers of the first four cafés I tried registered what was almost horror on my enquiring if they could serve me with something to eat. Drink they could supply—*si, señor !*—but food—*Jesús !* At the fifth café, though, I intimidated the barman into admitting that not only had he drinks, but eats, too, in the shape of *bocadillos con jamón* : ham sandwiches, or rather, butterless rolls with dark, tough, unpleasant-tasting Spanish ham in between ; and on half a dozen of these, and three glasses of coffee, I dined. Then after testing every coin of my change on the slate slab on the counter upon which the barman had repeatedly rung the silver piece which I tendered in payment, I called it a day and put my laziest foot forward for the place where I intended to spend the night.

This place was the town of Ciudad Real, distanced some twenty kilometres south of Fernancaballero ; and it took me all of an unforgettable afternoon of heat and thirst to win that far.

In the face of a hot, suffocating wind, a very sirocco, that beat in steadily recurring blasts from the south, I progressed across the burning plain at a snail's pace, the sun a furnace in front of me and the sand-strewn road reflecting its blinding glare and scorifying calidity in a manner most murderous.



It being a main road, there were the usual road-menders' cottages lining the route a league's length apart. —These, let me remind you, are a feature of Spanish highways. Above the door is always the sign: *Peones Camineros*, while on either white-washed gable is always painted in prominent lettering the mileage to and from the nearest village and next big town. They occur towards the end of every sixth kilometre. —So, for by this time I had fallen into the habit of calling at these places and filling up with water which the roadmen's wives readily accommodated me with, I knew I wouldn't altogether die of thirst. But the league of six kilometres of blistering roadway that separated one cottage from another all but finished me. The inches seemed as yards, the yards miles. Thoughts and desires that materialised almost into visions tormented and tantalised me, as miraged oases torment and tantalise desert travellers. I half-saw lakes shimmering ahead and rivers shining. I half-heard the babble of brooks and the plashing of well-water. . . . It gave me a good idea of what hell will be like.

At one place, one of these shining rivers looked so real that I left the road and waded into the brimming waters until I was up to the knee. And the sensation of having wet feet was astonishingly realistic.

"Hi, there!" I called to a passing muleteer who was looking on in amazement: "Can you tell me if this is a river?"

"What river?" he called back.

"This river I'm standing in."

"Certainly," came the unexpected answer: "That's the Rio Guadiana!"

At long last, after seeming centuries of purgatorial progress, I attained a ridge from which stretched to the horizon a dusty plain, wherein the

## AT THE GATE OF CIUDAD REAL

golden radiance of the now declining sun gilded and made manifest the spires and steeples of a considerable city—Ciudad Real.

From the ridge two roads descended ; an old road and a new ; the one winding and ankle-deep in dust and in places almost obliterated, the other straight as a Roman way, polished of surface, and bordered by green verges, grassy banks, and tall trees planted equidistant apart, making an avenue at whose far end, flanked by the white city walls, could be seen the romantic horseshoe archway of the Moorish gate to the city.

Half-way along this picturesque vista I downed my pack on the bankside and proceeded to clean myself up, admiring the while the resplendent sunset and every minute turning my head in expectation of seeing either a camel or an elephant with a howdah on its back come out through that *Arabian Nights* portal—it was so patently Eastern.

Part of the time I was thus engaged I was aware of being spied upon by some man who kept dodging about from one tree to another. Try as I would, too, I could never catch proper sight of him. He was always too quick for me, withdrawing behind a trunk or ducking below the top of the bank just in time to escape my glance. At length, probably having decided that I wasn't worth spying on, he prowled off, hugging the screening bank until well away, when he emerged on the road, stood looking back at me for a moment, then continued on up the avenue with the furtive gait of an assassin out to kill.

For the man was armed. He carried a rifle ready in his hands. And in that short moment when he stood looking back at me I caught sight of what looked like a cartridge belt worn slantwise across his breast under his coat ; and this, together with the leggings into which his trousers were stuffed,

and the black slouch hat which shaded his unshaven face, reminded me of pictures I had seen of armed Boers. Decidedly a tough bird, a bandit maybe, I thought, or possibly one of those gunmen whom current rumour reported as infesting the roads of Spain. If so, where were the Civil Guards—the modern counterparts of the old Holy Brotherhood of Don Quixote's time and Gil Blas's day, which Ferdinand and Isabella first organised in this self-same city of Ciudad Real—where were they ?

But meanwhile the sun had set, so in the rapidly darkening twilight I resumed the road and duly arrived at the city gate. Here the new road, instead of passing straight through, turned off sharply to the right along the outside of the old walls and ruined towers ; wherefore I gave it the go-by. The old road was my road, entering as it did through the arched gateway and conducting me into the heart of the city by way of a long, deserted, musty, dusty, grass-grown street of blank walls and silent houses, and thence, by devious alleys where in the deep quiet my footfalls rang echoingly as in a vaulted sepulchre, to busier streets and the thronging, palm-planted Plaza.

Hardly had I set boot-sole to pavement here than half a dozen shoeblacks bore down on me as one man. The sight of the thick dust coating my shoes drew from them wild animal noises of rapture and delight. They jostled waiters and knocked over café chairs in their ecstatic rush. For here, by *Dios*, was a job ! Here, Holy Mother, were shoes to shine ! And, *Jesús*, what shoes ! But—tableau !—to their enormous amazement I repulsed them. To their vast flabbergastment and immeasurable bewilderment I waved them off, telling them to go to the devil. For I am the kind of bloke who blacks his own shoes, always carrying in my pack a big tin

of polish and a couple of wee brushes out of Woolworth's. And so, leaving the would-be shoe-shiners standing speechless and incredulous and shaken to the deep heart's core, I navigated the table-obstructed passageway of the piazzas, steered into the street called Carlos Vasquez, and dropped anchor for the week-end in the Grand Hotel there.

Over the entrance gate to Ciudad Real should be written: *Aquí no pasa nada*. For one cannot imagine anything ever happening there, or being allowed to happen. It is a stagnant backwater of a town, little and lazy, dusty and dry, sleepy and slow, more Provençal than Spanish, pleasant rather than dull, where the womenfolk all carry fans and never leave off waving them, and the menfolk all roll cigarettes which they never cease from smoking, and where the *mañana* habit is chronic and ingrained. And yet—and yet it is in just such drowsy dorps as Ciudad Real that trivial events with world-shaking sequels happen. Witness Sarajevo.

On the Monday, after a lazy and uneventful week-end, I was up and away betimes: glad to exchange the boiled-shirt boredom of the Grand Hotel for the dusty and sweaty exhilaration of padding the hoof.

Eastward from Ciudad Real I pursued the main Daniel road as far as the village of Carrion de Calatrava, where I left it for a branch road leading south-eastward through a countryside of vast fields and olive groves and vineyards to the little town of Almagro.

This benighted place lies at a distance of about thirteen miles from Ciudad Real; hence, as I had breakfasted on the usual inadequate roll and cup of coffee before starting out, when I reached there I was weak with want, absolutely dropping apart with starvation. Unbounded was my joy, therefore, on entering Almagro's picturesque Plaza with its

cobbles and painted wooden housefronts and pillared piazzas, to see outside a restaurant a board bearing the belly-warming slogan : *Comidas para Viajeros*.

Dinners for travellers ! Hors d'œuvres and soup and fish and omelette and lamb chops and fried potatoes and radishes with butter and cauliflower and salad and vanilla cream, and apples, pears, peaches, plums, cherries, strawberries, oranges, bananas, nuts and coffee—boy, what I would do to them ! In anticipation I gormandised *à la* Barmecide, my mouth watering as copiously as though I had the water-brash.

But alas—blast it !—the restaurant was closed. Hammer on the door as I would, too, nobody responded, until an upstairs bedroom window flew suddenly open and the proprietor, whose siesta I was interrupting, stuck his head out and angrily commanded me to desist.

" But I want in ! " I shouted up to him. " I want a dinner ! "

" You're too late," he called back.

" Too late ? Why, it's only twenty minutes past one—look." I pointed to the Plaza clock.

" Yes, yes ! You're twenty minutes too late. We don't serve dinners after one. Go away ! "

" You don't serve—— Great God, what kind of place is this ! —Hi, don't go in ! I'll pay you double for a dinner. See, I've got money ! " I held up a fistful of palm-oil.

The proprietor showed interest.

" You mean you'll pay me the price of two dinners for one ? "

" Absolutely ! " I assured him.

" Ah, but what sort of dinner would you be wanting ? A big one ? "

" A big one, yes. Full course ! I'm starving ! "

" Oh, very well, then. *Come back at eight-thirty.*"

## ACCEPTING THE INEVITABLE

Spain is just too wonderful, my dear. Spaniards are the most polite and hospitable people in the world. Dear old sunny Spain !

By the time I had recovered my powers of speech the proprietor was gone back to bed, and the remarks I addressed to the shut window all but melted it. Then, my vocabulary of invective exhausted, I turned to see what other places of entertainment the Plaza might hold, only to discover that King Siesta had locked and put his seal on every shop in the square, and that I was the sole living creature abroad in the entire town. Yes, the streets and alleyways of Almagro were as silent and bereft of life as those of Pompeii.

For a long moment of blood-curdling bitterness I stood imbibing these facts, my legs trembling under me in sheer hunger-weakness, the weight of the unlimited but useless supply of money in my pack almost more than my soul could bear. Then, accepting the inevitable and calling down a curse on the heads of all rude Castilian boors who against the houseless stranger shut the door, I passed on out of Almagro for ever, hate in my heart and desolation in my belly.

Along the now dreary road I plodded dejectedly for ten mortal kilometres more, to where the stinking little dilapidated old midden of a town calling itself Moral de Calatrava lay putrefying under a range of what looked less like hills than muck heaps. And here I wasted three-quarters of an hour traversing the cobbles in vain search of a proper eating place ; passing and repassing the open doors of cottage factories in which cheeky young girls and bold women sat at low frames making lace and fun of me.

Eventually, in a lousy, bead-curtained dive, I managed to procure a tin of sardines and a few small rolls, for which the proprietor had to send

out ; though what little measure of enjoyment this mockery of a meal afforded me was most exasperatingly depleted by idleonians pestering me for English cigarettes which I hadn't got, and wouldn't have parted with even if I had—a hungry man being not only an angry man but a mean man. It was in the devil of a temper, therefore, that I at length shook the dust of Moral de Calatrava from off my feet and started out for Valdepeñas, nineteen kilometres distant.

Into a long, wide valley-plain between low hills the road unrolled its monotonous length, occasionally rising to hearten me with glimpses of the town it was making for, dead ahead. But the sun set, night fell, and still Valdepeñas, now a glowing cluster of lights in the velvet dark, held off mockingly like an *ignis fatuus*, appearing to recede as swiftly as I advanced.

Like a mechanical man I strode onward at a terrific rate, every muscle at full go, my blood on fire, sweat lashing off me, fatigue and hunger and all else forgotten, tearing along the crown of the road looking neither to right nor left, never slackening pace ; the bordering trees, equidistant apart and banded with whitewash, coming rushing at me out of the black tunnel of night ahead to velocipede past me into the black tunnel of night behind, the strip of sky between their tops faintly luminous with stars ; tearing along, tearing along, the wind whistling in my ears, the cicadas throbbing and thrilling in ceaseless song, tearing along towards that elusive cluster of lights that was Valdepeñas . . . and coming at last to civilised pavements, when ten o'clock was striking.

What a strange town ! Long, straight, seemingly interminable cobbled streets, crossing each other at right angles, flanked by tall, blank, whitewashed

house-walls, dimly lighted by bare electric bulbs placed high up and far apart, and not an inhabitant visible. It was like entering a forsaken city. My footsteps echoed eerily as I threaded its deserted maze. Where in Hades, I wondered, were the hotels?

I didn't have to wonder long, however. Suddenly, on rounding a corner, I found myself in a brightly lighted, comparatively busy street, and, in the clap of a hand, just like that! I was being besieged by a crowd of ragged urchins all clamouring for permission to guide me to an hotel.

This permission I bestowed on a chocolate-coloured imp, who claimed to be page to the Hotel Paloma . . . and a short half hour saw me washed and changed and seated before an umpteenth-course dinner in the glittering comedor of that hotel, looking back upon the hunger of the day and the fierce forced march of the night much as a wakened dreamer, from his safe and cosy bed, looks back upon the nightmare that yanked him out of dreamland.

Valdepeñas is a nondescript town, noteworthy only on account of the rich red wine it produces; and my departure from it next morning was early and rapid.

Over vine-planted uplands I followed the road southward towards the foothills of the Sierra Morena, whose chain of peaks now ramparted the horizon. The weather was wonderful. From a blue, unclouded sky the sun beamed gloriously down, its heat tempered by intermittent breezes from the mountains. Decidedly a day to be afoot, a day to be faring forth, a day to be traversing so renowned a region as this of La Mancha.

For I was now in the midst of the domain immortalised by Cervantes. I was now in Don Quixote



Land. Away on my left lay the celebrated Plain of Montiel, the arena whereon the Mirror of Knight-errantry and his squire strutted and fretted to their author's prompting; where it was that the most terrifying and never-to-be-imagined adventure of the windmills befell, and where, in the deep Cave of Montesinos, the mad Manchegan beheld wonders without end. And away behind lay Venta de Quesada, the scene of Don Quixote's vigil by the well, where the keeper of the inn dubbed him knight. And away in front—away in front, as I have said, the horizon was ramparted by the chained peaks of the Sierra Morena: the identical Black Mountain wherein, among other memorable adventures, Don Quixote freed the galley slaves and scandalised Sancho Panza by stripping himself naked and throwing somersaults in imitation of Beltenebros, the Lovely Obscure.

In the course of the day I passed through Santa Cruz de Mudela and Almuradiel. The first was a cheery little village where I dined in a *casa de huéspedes* after a wait of two hours, while the other, a wretched one-street hamlet of hovels perched high among desert foothills, was unique in that it had no place where one could buy drink.

"Well, where can I get some water?" I asked the yokel who had acquainted me with this uniqueness.

"Try over there," says he, pointing across the sun-bright street to the blackness of an open doorway. Whereupon I crossed over and entered. But, my eyes being dazzled by the outside glare, I could see nothing for a moment. So, says I aloud, groping blindly about—

"What cursed place is this? Where the devil am I? There's no damned water here!"

But just then my sight returned, and ye gods! there stood I in a sort of mission house, where a

## TOWARDS THE SIERRAS

young men's class was receiving holy instruction—from a priest !

After Almuradiel, for many kilometres, I was journeying through romantic mountain scenery, rejoicing that every step was bringing me nearer to the defile in the sierras by which I would pass at last out of Castile into the valley of the Guadalquivir : the defile of Despeña Perros, gateway into Andalusia.

## LAP THE SEVENTEENTH

### GATEWAY INTO ANDALUSIA

Apathetic villagers—Turned away—In Despeña Perros—Through the night and the rain—Santa Elena—A Socialist Samaritan—Andalusia!—La Carolina—The *pita* plant—The Call of the Alhambra—*Mañana* versus *ahora*—Andalusian scene.

AT SUNSET I reached the last village on the Castilian side of the Sierra Morena, Venta de Cardenas.

A bright little place this was, with clean, well-dressed people going about ; and I thought I should have no trouble in finding board and lodging for the night. But I thought wrong. Try as I would I could find no place—nor even sympathy. Everybody stood at their doors watching apathetically while I went about asking, asking, asking. A fat lot they cared whether the houseless stranger got harbourage or not ! Obviously none of them had ever read authoritative guide-books to Spain else they would have known that courtesy and hospitality to the visiting foreigner are fundamentals of the Spanish character.

Although once or twice I was directed to places, with the assurance that I should be eagerly welcomed and accommodated, yet I drew a blank each time. Nay, I felt that my informants had deliberately misinformed me so as to enjoy my discomfiture. Even the big hotel-restaurant at the end of the village, whither five different people referred me, repulsed me with amused contempt.

## TURNED AWAY

"We don't take boarders," the proprietor said, waving me off. "We never have done."

"But—but surely there must be some place that will take me in," I suggested. "Don't you know of any?"

"Why, yes," returned the inhospitable boor, pointing down the darkening road towards the fearsome hell-mouth of Despeña Perros. "Down there you'll find a place."

"How far down?" I asked.

"Oh—not far. Only about fifteen kilometres."

Torquemada and his inquisitors, and Pizarro and his conquerors, were made of similar heartless stuff.

Speechless, I turned away. In the rapidly gathering darkness, with rain beginning to fall, I swung off down that desolate rocky road towards the wild, terrifying rent in the mountain wall; and if one stone of Venta de Cardenas still stands upon another, it is only because the gods no longer act upon information received, for I complained to them uproariously enough, my malisons reverberating among the crags like thunder peals.

Heart in mouth, I strode towards the great black pass. Its portals loomed ahead like the entrance to the Pit, like the Scylla and Charybdis of dire doom. Blacker, more fright-awakening rock I had never seen, save, maybe, in the Black Coolins in Skye. The depth and narrowness, too, of the cloven ravine, drained the strength from my limbs, numbed me to the marrow, almost paralysed me. But bracing myself, I entered. Into the titanic gap, in through its demoniacal maw, I followed the daring road between precipice walls along a ledge half-way between hell and heaven—and impenetrable dark engulfed me.

It was as though I had suddenly been stricken sightless. What with the dense soot-black gloom

of the hemming crags and the lightless night roofing the chasm, I could only make headway by groping with my stick like a blind man, trusting to instinct and the feel of the smooth roadway underfoot to keep me from disaster. For strain my eyeballs as I might I could not see. I could not even see my hand when I held it immediately in front of my eyes, touching the eyewinkers. I was only aware, as a blind man would have been aware, of the presence of breakneck cliff walls soaring above the road on my right, and of similar breakneck cliff walls on my left plunging from the road edge into the depths of the abyss below. And out of fear of stepping to my death off that road edge, I hugged the rough, out-jutting face of the cliff wall on my right, sometimes feeling along it with my hands. —It reminded me of the night when I made the traverse of the Bad Step of Trodhu above Loch Scavaig in the Misty Isle.

By degrees the pass opened out, the dark grew not so dark, the road began to reveal itself, nebulously grey, and soon I could walk with greater confidence.

All this while silence had enwrapped the defile ; silence as profound as the gloom was deep. Now, however, the rapid *clippity-clop* of a donkey ascending towards me broke the quiet. Halting, I stood in the middle of the road. Nearer and nearer came—not the donkey, but the noise. For, try as I would to pierce the darkness, I failed to discern anything. It was eerie in the extreme, like watching the invisible. And onward it came—*clippity-clop, clippity-clop*—till it was fairly abreast, when I shouted "*Hola ! Quién es ? Alto !*" and prodded the dark with my stick. But not a sound came from the rider, whose presence I could distinctly sense, nor did the donkey slacken or falter in its quick, rhythmic gait. And "*Alto ! Alto !*" I cried again, and ran

on ahead and stopped dead in the noise's path, arms wide extended, blocking the way. But the invisible beast and its dumb and equally invisible rider came steadily onward—*clippity-clop, clippity-clop*—and, passing right through me, or so it seemed, held on up the pass, weirdly unconcerned and aloof, like unbodied beings of a spirit world.

I tell you, it gave me a turn ; so uncanny an encounter, in such a place. And as I stood there a-thrill, arms still outstretched, some circumstantial affinity made me recall another night long ago on the other side of the Atlantic, when I had stood on the banks of a New Brunswick river watching the ice coming down, moving through the ink-black water as noiseless as wraiths. . . .

Thereafter the road fell swiftly down, down, down, taking ravine after ravine in its stride, and when I thought it was clear of the heights for good, heavens ! it began to rise, in great winding bends and loops, up, up, up, round and round and round, soaring through the night and the rain until I lost all sense of direction and time and distance.

Then a light appeared by the wayside, coming from a cottage where the family were at supper. But they would have none of me. The man of the house told me that there was a village, Santa Elena, further on, where the posada would surely take me in ; and, my eyes being dazzled by the light, and the darkness being so black, he had to light a lantern and come out and lead me back to the road again, and start me off in the right direction.

On and on I toiled along the ever-soaring, ever-looping way, up mountain valleys and over hilltops. Warm wet winds, full of the smell of sodden greenery and now and again redolent of mint, beat about me continually. Under my damp clothes my body burned and sweated with the ceaseless exertion.

My fatigue was great, yet I halted only once : when I tripped over something white lying quiet and still in the middle of the road ; which something was the lifeless, and headless, body of a dog that a motor had run over. And I saw people only once : when the red glow of a camp-fire down in a hollow lit up the wild faces of gypsies seated round it.

Then at last, after an eternity of benightedness, footsore, fatigued to a painful degree, and raging with thirst, I arrived at the village of Santa Elena.

Going straight to the one posada in the place, I knocked and kicked and hammered on the locked outer gate for long enough, but without result. It was nearly midnight, anyway ; all honest folk were indoors and abed. Save for a lighted window or two, and the barking of a dog nearby, the village was given over to darkness and silence. My luck was definitely out. Once more, with an unlimited supply of money in my pack, I was experiencing absolute want. Lighting a cigarette, I sank down on the edge of the pavement in the softly falling rain, too wearied to mind, too utterly tired even to curse.

Now directly opposite, on the other side of Santa Elena's main street, there happened to be a Socialist meeting-hall, out of which, in a little while, young Socialist fellows began to emerge in twos and threes, hotly debating mankind's fate in general and Spain's destiny in particular. And one of these fellows, catching sight of me sitting smoking in the rain, leaves off debating and comes over.

" Good-evening, Monsieur," says he, speaking in French, but with so peculiar an accent that I could hardly make him out. " Can I be of any assistance ? —Monsieur is French, is he not ? "

" Yes, Monsieur is French," I told him. " The posada is shut, and there's no hotel or anything.

And Monsieur is sitting here because Monsieur can't stand."

"But Monsieur has money, yes?"

"Yes, Monsieur has money."

"Then if Monsieur will have the goodness to accompany me to the house of my grandmother——"

I did have the goodness, all right, though scarcely the ability; however I managed to accompany the fellow, who was a Catalan, to his grandmother's house, which was a dark and silent slum at the bottom of a lane off the main street. And the old lady welcomed me and showed me straight to an upstairs chamber, where I lost not a minute in tumbling into bed; although the ache in my bones was such that I did not fall asleep for a couple of hours or more.

Late in the morning I rose, to find waiting for me downstairs the first real breakfast I had seen since setting foot in Spain: two boiled eggs! a cut of cheese! bread with butter! a jug of milk! and a pot, a whole pot, of coffee! But my hostess went and spoilt everything by demanding payment there and then; and on my handing her the reckoning, four pesetas, she rang the coins one after another, first on the table, next on the floor, then on the tiled window-sill!

Out on the open road again, in the golden blaze of day, I quickly forgot and forgave all. For I was now in Jaen: I was at last in Andalusia. Castile lay behind, beyond the sierras; while the sierras, whose fastnesses I had stormed and carried in the black and dark night, they, too, lay behind, their sky-flaunting battlements piling away and away on the right in ever-diminishing perspective into the blue dimness of remotest distance, keeping watch and ward upon the great valley of the Guadalquivir that wound onward for two hundred miles and more to the ocean in the west.



## Andalusia !

What a land to wander through ! A land where the sun would ever shine from cerulean skies ; where no wind would blow, but only zephyrs sigh ; where it would be always afternoon ; where I would meet with the palm and the cactus and the locust tree ; where I would see the aloe and the sugar cane grow ; where orange groves would abound, and figs and pomegranates strew the blossoming earth ; where I would behold mosques and minarets and Meccas and Baghdads. An enchanted fairy-tale land—an earthly Heaven—a terrestrial Paradise !

“ In six days,” says the Andaluz, “ God made Heaven and Earth. And on the seventh day He laid Him down to rest in Andalusia.”

It was no wonder, then, as I fared onward from Santa Elena into the south-west, over the breezy upland plains of Las Navas de Tolosa, where Moor and Crusader battled bloodily of old, that my thoughts should be agog with so delectable a land.

Andalusia was the ancient Tartessus, the Biblical Tarshish. The Romans called it *Bætica*, from the *Bætis*, the present-day Guadalquivir, which waters it length-long. Its modern name, Andalusia (*Andalucía* in Spanish), derives either from the Moorish term which signified Land of the West, or else is a beheaded form of Vandalusia, from the Vandals who overran it in the 5th century. It achieved greatest renown under the Moors, by whom it was portioned into four principalities : Seville, Cordova, Jaen, and Granada, hence its other name of The Four Kingdoms. To-day it is divided into eight provinces : those of Almeria, Cadiz, Cordova, Granada, Huelva, Jaen, Malaga, and Seville. It was, and to a considerable extent still is, the orchard and garden and granary of Spain. Its rich mineral wealth has been exploited since Phœnician times.

## LA CAROLINA

Its climate ranges from the African heat of its plains to the Siberian cold of its eternally snow-clad mountain peaks. Its people are languid and indolent, likeable, pleasure-loving, work-shirking, procrastinating liars and boasters; and as laziness makes for cruelty, so they make the best bull-fighters and the most appreciative bull-fight audiences. Its cities are the most interesting and picturesque in Spain. The four great monuments of its Arabian past, which all the world comes to see, are the Giralda and Alcazar of Seville, the Mezquita of Cordova, and the Alhambra of Granada. —That's Andalusia.

Revelling in the sun and breeze I progressed onward and downward, the foothills falling away in front to a far rolling plain green with olive trees and dotted over with mine-heads. Hamlets, all called *Venta de Something-or-other*, occurred on the road at short intervals apart; the smell of them always greeted my nostrils a kilometre or two beforehand. And the policemen of these little places were comical-looking cusses, dressed as they were in the identical uniform of the Keystone cops of early film fame—high helmets and batons and all. Some, too, wore huge goggle-like sun-spectacles of black glass. Shades of Ford Sterling! I nearly died.

At noon I arrived in the big village of La Carolina, and a page-boy who was playing in the Plaza directed me to the Hotel Cervantes. But not until two o'clock striking was I served with dinner, although three Spaniards and a Frenchman and his wife were served immediately they came in. For two mortal hours I was made wait, the fat waitress putting me off with one excuse and another, until I could stand it no longer, when I up and told her that if she didn't serve me there and then I would go dine at

the rival hotel opposite. And that made her skip. I was attended to instanter.

"It wasn't the waiting so much as your serving those others before me," I told her after the meal. "Why did you do that?"

"Because they came in a motor-car," was the amazing reply; "while you—you only came on foot."

From La Carolina the road continued steadily to descend into the Guadalquivir valley. For kilometre after kilometre it ran between extensive olive groves, rising at times into clear places from which could be viewed, stretching ahead and all around as far as eye could see, a veritable ocean of olive-clad hills and dales.

As usual I was the only pedestrian. Muleteers and men and women on donkeyback, with an occasional motor-car, comprised the traffic. Of villages there were quite a few, and I always smelt the downright stink of these long before they came into sight. And I noticed that the common headgear among the menfolk was now the Andalusian sombrero: round, flat-topped, slightly tapering crown, with broad stiff brim, and generally black in colour. Also, occasionally I saw men wearing the *faja*, or scarlet waist-band.

Then, too, I now began to encounter the huge tropical-looking *pita* plant, or giant aloe, growing by the roadside. A remarkable plant this. Imagine a tall slender palm tree which some practical joker has felled and stood on its head upside-down. And imagine that the bushy crown of leaves, from the midst of which the naked stem shoots up like a mast, is not a crown of palm leaves but a crown of aspidistra leaves, six feet and more in length, extremely thick and fleshy at the base but tapering to a needle-

point at the tip, and of a grey-green ashen hue. That's the *pita*. A man I spoke to said that rope, white rope, was made from the fibres. But not every *pita* plant I encountered had the central stem. Quite a number consisted solely of the bunch of spiky aspidistra-like leaves.

In the blue-and-gold eventide I came to the plains of olives, and sat long beside a cross-roads debating whether I should continue westward along the Guadalquivir valley towards Cordova, Seville, and Cadiz, or turn off south across Jaen and over the Sierra Nevada down into Granada.

The Alhambra called, you see. In fact, it had been calling for days—curse it. And the more it called the more the idea of visiting it revolted me. For I hate visiting places-that-must-be-visited. I detest 'doing' guide-infested show burgs. And I knew that everybody who went to Spain went to Granada, to oh and ah at the Alhambra, that too exquisite and too divinely supreme pearl of Moorish art in Spain, my dear. I knew, too, that *quien no ha visto Granada, no ha visto nada*.<sup>1</sup> —But why, I asked myself, should I visit it? I knew all about it already. Washington Irving's description and laudation of its unparalleled glories were at my finger ends. It was my paramount castle in Spain, built of the gossamer-and-moonbeam stuff of dreams; to visit it and find it made of mere clay would be to shatter its fabric as completely as the Barber's Fifth Brother, by knocking over his glassware, shattered his visioned future. —No, I decided at length: one Alhambra in the mind is worth two in the memory. And so, rising with the point settled, I continued westward into the sunset.

Four kilometres of olive-bordered highway brought me to a green hill, from over which, distinct in the

<sup>1</sup> Who hasn't seen Granada, hasn't seen anything.

twilight, floated the sound of children's voices ; and after passing some grain-fields and a tile-works I found myself entering the straggling little town of Bailen.

A reception committee of small boys was there to welcome me with hostile cries of "*Francia ! Francia !*" accompanied by a shower of stones ; so, collaring the ringleader, I commanded him to pilot me to whatever inns and hotels Bailen boasted, telling him there was money in it for him if he did, and prison and death if he didn't.

At the fourth hostelry, the Hotel Victoria, the señorita in charge was as pleased to see my face as the others had been to see my back ; whereupon I dismissed my youthful guide with a wave of the hand and a murmured "*Mañana,*" meaning that I would tip him anon.

But he wasn't having any of that.

"*No, no, señor,*" he said with finality, resolutely standing his ground. "*Qué no ! Ahora, señor, ahora !* Not to-morrow. Now—NOW !"

"*No, mañana,*" I persisted, delighted at this chance of hoisting a Spaniard with his own petard, of rowelling him with his own spur. "*Mañana, mañana, mañana !*" I fairly rubbed it in.

"*No, ahora.*"

"*No, mañana.*"

"*No !*"

"*Si !*"

So we went at it, hammer and tongs. And only when I saw that another *mañana* would draw the young rogue's tears did I desist, giving him his tip and bidding him throw no more stones at unoffending foreigners—Frenchmen or no Frenchmen.

I have since wondered if this animosity against the French, displayed by these Bailen boys, might not have its roots in the great battle between the

## ANDALUSIAN SCENE

Spanish and French forces which took place in the immediate vicinity during the Peninsular War: the Battle of Bailen, 1808, when General Dupont's men, laden with the spoils of Cordova and reeking with the blood of that city's massacred inhabitants, were soundly and deservedly trounced.

Well, I stopped the night in the Hotel Victoria. For supper, amongst other toothsome dainties, they served me with a *tortilla*, or omelette, made with eggs, potatoes, and onions—the most delicious thing I have ever put my teeth into. And the olives—you should have seen the olives: they were as big as plums!

For breakfast next morning I was given only a cup of coffee and a solitary bun, but, hearing a great noise and bustle going on outside in the little Plaza adjoining, and glancing out to see the cause, I forgot the inadequacy of my rations in the colourful spectacle that greeted my eyes.

In the middle of the cobbled square stood a fountain, its jetting waters and brimming basins sparkling like liquid diamond-stuff in the bright morning sunshine. And round this crowded people: peasant women and girls dressed in black, filling pitchers; muleteers in blue shirts, yellow trousers, scarlet sashes, and wearing Andalusian hats, letting their mules drink; water-carriers loading their long-eared burros with brimful water-jars; ploughmen in monkey jackets and tasselled leggings watering their teams, upon whose backs were strapped the parts of ploughs; other horsemen waiting their turn at the trough, smoking cigars and rolling cigarettes—horsemen who reminded me of pictures I had seen of armed Boers, for each had a rifle slung behind him and wore slant-wise across his breast under his coat what looked like a cartridge belt. Then at one corner of the square two Civil Guards in their neat

green uniform and black cocked hats, with pistol and sword, stood chaffing an old woman who was frying fritters in a big black pan over a charcoal fire. At another corner lounged a member of the Guardia de Asalto keeping an eye on a crowd of loafers. At yet another a Moor in fez and burnous sat crosslegged, arranging trinkets on a tray. Then a baker and a milkman were entering the square, each leading a panniered donkey ; the one laden with round loaves like cheeses, the other with two huge milk cans. Also, down the vista of a narrow lane leading off the square could be seen departing a long train of heavily burdened mules, while in from another lane a mixed flock of sheep and goats was flooding the square with its leaping tide. And what with the laughter and shouting of the horsemen, the cries of the drovers, the stamp and ring of shod hoofs on cobblestones, the hee-hawing of donkeys, the tinkling of mule-bells and the clangour of women's tongues, to say nothing of the bleating of the sheep and goats, one couldn't hear one's ears. Altogether, a scene more full of life and colour it would be difficult to imagine.

## LAP THE EIGHTEENTH

### WHERE THE GUADALQUIVIR FLOWS

By the Rio Rumblar—Olive haciendas—Jumping beans—  
Another phenomenon—The *Scarabæus sacer*—At the rifle's  
point—Andujar Town Guard—A brainless pastime—The  
melted road—In Pedro Abad—Putting up at a posada—  
Twice-striking clocks—A jewel-built city—Beggars on horse-  
back—The white mare—Kurt and Otto.

IN DUE course I took the road out of Bailen, heading westward for the next town, Andujar, twenty miles away.

It was a switchback road. It ran mostly between olive groves and cornfields where men and women wearing large sun-hats sang in chorus as they worked. And, the heat being intense, I made slow progress, resting frequently and never free from consuming thirst.

In time I came to where a sunken river, the Rio Rumblar, on its way to join the Guadalquivir further down, rushed and tumbled through a rocky defile. Borrow in *The Bible in Spain* tells of how at this place the mail was once held up by robbers who set fire to the coach and tortured and butchered the soldiers escorting it, blowing a corporal's head to bits with a blunderbuss.

Here I lingered long, held fascinated by the rare and refreshing sight of foaming rapids and swirling pools. But I had to be wary. The place was alive with snakes. The unbearably hot rocks simply swarmed with them, as did the shallower pools, where they could be seen swimming about like eels.



Lizards, too, as big as cats, and spiders of great size, and bull-frogs, were numerous. Oh, it was a proper wild and savage place. And here it was that, for the first time, I saw cactus: real prickly cactus, with red and yellow buds sprouting from the top edge of the fleshy pads like toes on a foot. I was in my element.

Beyond the Rio Rumblar extensive olive haciendas bordered the road for miles. This made for monotony. Silent and deserted, the groves stretched far back on either hand, vista succeeding vista, aisle succeeding aisle, ordered, regular, uniform, the endless files of gnarled and contorted trunks always appearing to radiate from the point of vision. Nor did these woodlands, which were all unfenced and open to the road, afford shelter from the sun. The foliage of the olive is too sparse to cast any real shade. Neither was there greensward where one could lie down and rest. The ground beneath the trees and in the open glades was just bare earth, reddish in hue, cracked and broken and iron-hard with drought. No, there was no escape from the burning heat.

At midday or thereabouts the olive groves came to an end, and a *ventorillo*, or hedge pub, mercifully hove in sight.

A little cottage this was, with the trelliswork porch overgrown with vine, and hordes of voracious flies and bluebottles abuzz in the dark interior. When I could see, I saw standing on a table that occupied the middle of the flagged floor a little sunburnt boy, completely naked, who was posed in an attitude identical with that of the little fellow on yon fountain behind the Hôtel de Ville in Brussels: the Mannikin Fountain. Yes. And he was doing the same thing. Then an old woman bartender materialised, also a bar with an array of

bottles and festoons of sausages, and two goatherds sitting drinking. And after much ado about nothing I was served with half a loaf of dry bread, a portion of musty cheese, and a couple of bottles of lukewarm pilsener, for which the old woman charged me 3.30 pesetas. But I couldn't grumble. The big pitcher of water which I drained dry, and for which I was charged nothing, was worth ten times that sum.

Driven forth by the flies, I continued along the melting road to where a bridge with a lot of arches spanned a dried-up rivercourse. The frogs here, though, were so noisy that a siesta was impossible ; so after a smoke I again resumed the simmering tarmac.

Olive haciendas once more lined the route. At intervals I passed gateways of ornate tilework and ironwork that gave entrance to the various estates, each of which bore a name with a religious significance ; some haciendas, for instance, being called after saints, others after the Assumption, etc. And at one of these gateways—that of the Hacienda of the Trinity—I met in with what I fancy were first cousins to the Mexican jumping bean.

Hardly was I sat down in the shade of the gate than my ears were assailed by curious pinging sounds and my face and hands tingled to the impact of what felt like tiny pellets. Looking around to discover the cause of this singularity I found myself in the midst of a swarm of leaping things the same size and about the same shape and colour as split peas, with no visible legs or head. It was most phenomenal. When I touched one it would give out a sharp *ping* ! then leap wildly into space as though projected from an invisible catapult. But I did not need to touch them to make them leap. They leaped of their own accord, always pinging before they leaped. The height and distance they

could leap, too, compared with their size, was surprising: three feet and over perpendicularly, and from six to eight feet horizontally. I attempted to cut one open to see what little devil it was that supplied the propelling power inside, but the hardness and liveliness of the thing defied vivisection. Heaven knows what they were, or what purpose they serve. All I know is that they were as opposed to my indulging in a siesta as the flies and frogs had been. In disgust I picked up myself and walked.

Presently another rivercourse spanned by a bridge with a number of arches thwarted my path; and the frogs being not so noisy here as at the other, I sought the shade of the only archway that had water, a mere trickle, flowing through it.

But the nap I intended taking I didn't get taking. No sooner was I settled down and about to close my eyes when something moving among the pebbles of the sloping river bank attracted my attention. At first I thought it might be a frog, or a lizard, maybe, but latterly I saw what it was: namely, a perfectly round object, slightly smaller than a billiard ball, made of some dark substance, without visible head or legs—and, in defiance of the law of gravity, it was rolling uphill!

I just had to get up and investigate. Beans that jumped, and now a ball that rolled backwards of its own accord—this plethora of phenomena was positively unnerving.

Approaching the thing where it continued to roll slowly but steadily up the sloping bank, I saw what I had not seen before: that behind the ball, pushing it, was a beetle. And when I saw what kind of beetle this was, everything became clear.

It was a scarabæid beetle—in fact, the identical *Scarabæus sacer*, or sacred dung-beetle, which by the ancient Egyptians was venerated during its life as

the symbol of resurrection and fertility, and after death embalmed ; the same in whose image seals and gems and amulets were fashioned, and which Khepra, the scarab-headed god, was pictured as supporting on his shoulders ; while the ball which it kept rolling uphill was the ball of dung wherein its kind of beetle deposits its eggs and which by the Egyptians was held to symbolise the globe of the sun, just as the toes of the scarabæus, 30 in number, were held to symbolise the days of the month.

For more than an hour thereafter I followed the labours of that beetle, hanging over it lost in admiration. Its pluck and patience and colossal endurance were astounding, not to be compared to those of any mortal or immortal. It was a Sisypheus and Hercules and Atlas all in one. Imagine a man attempting to push a house up the slopes of the Himalayas, not with his hands, but with his feet : walking backwards on his hands, I mean, and pushing with his feet. Well, that is what that beetle was doing. With its fore-feet on the ground and its hind-feet elevated on high engaging the ball of dung, it was rolling and kicking it uphill, around and over pebbles as big as my head, sometimes missing its kick and having the ball roll back over it downhill a great way. Moreover, another beetle kept attacking it ; a bandit beetle. At every opportunity this other beetle would dash in and plunder the ball of dung, feasting on it like mad, until driven off. Then I, with the wantonness of a god, once squashed the ball with my stick, so that it cracked and gaped and nearly broke in two. But not a second did the valiant beetle lose in lamentation. It began instantly to knead and work and mash together the soft substance with its jaws and feet, reshaping the broken ball into a perfect sphere again, a job that took half an hour ; and, half-way through, it knocked

off to do battle with the bandit beetle, attacking it in fearful fury and killing it dead. Then on it went once more, pushing the remoulded ball uphill right to the top of the steep bank, from which a burning stretch of sand stretched away. And not content with having scaled the Himalayas, the beetle now began the traverse of this Sahara, still walking backwards on its fore-feet and pushing and kicking the ball forward with its hind-feet, as agile and energetic as ever.

"Beetle," says I in farewell, baring my head ; "I take off my hat to you. Of all the mighty feats of strength and endurance—— But what's the use? Words fail me. So-long. May your eggs hatch out, and may all your little 'uns be big 'uns!"

In the early evening Andujar came into sight—and into smell. The pungent, unmistakable stink of long-festered human ordure blew from the town in waft after poisonous waft. Sickened to the boking point, I dropped down on a grassy plot by the roadside behind a sheltering tree trunk, muffling my head in my coat to shut out the noisome fume.

I lay thus a good while until certain sounds close at hand caused me to sit up and unmuffle my head. And lo! I beheld standing over me a man who, by his dress, reminded me of pictures I had seen of armed Boers. For he wore a black slouch hat ; his face was unshaven ; at his back there was slung a short rifle ; a pouch hung by a strap from one shoulder, over which he carried a folded blanket ; and worn slantwise across his breast, under his short black jacket, was what looked like a cartridge belt. And on either side of me, similarly attired and with their rifles trained on my heart, stood two other men, ready to shoot me dead should I make the slightest move.

## ANDUJAR TOWN GUARD

"Is this smell always as strong, *señores*?" says I, after a pardonable pause.

The first man signed to the other two, who lowered their rifles, and all three squatted on the grass beside me.

"Who are you?" was my next question.

For answer the first man opened his jacket and revealed that what had looked like a cartridge belt was no such thing. It was merely a broad leather strap to which was affixed a big brass badge bearing the embossed inscription: *Guardia Municipal de Andújar*.

"Andujar Town Guard!" I cried, bitterly disappointed. "What rotten luck! Why, I thought you were gunmen, or bandits, or contrabandistas, or something!"

The three exchanged pleased glances. Such flattery from a foreigner was—was—was flattery, *si señor*!

"Yes," I went on, "having read about *Los Siete Niños de Ecija*,<sup>1</sup> I fancied that you might be—well—shall we say *Los Tres Muchachos de Andújar*?"

They laughed aloud at this. Then the first man, who, like his companions, wore at the side of his hat a large tricoloured rosette, recollected himself and asked to see my passport, the items of which, needless to say, he couldn't make head or tail of, so I had to translate, representing myself as a Dutch botanist from Glasgow in Zeeland, Isle of Wight, I.O.M.

Satisfied that I was not the malefactor they had at first thought I was, and for whom they were on the hunt, but about whom they vouchsafed no information, the Guardias soon left me, and I rose and made my way into Andujar.

This town is noted for the manufacture of *alcar-*

<sup>1</sup> The Seven Boys of Ecija: a famous band of brigands who at one time infested the lower Guadalquivir valley.

*razas*, or porous water-jars, which are made from a whitish clay found in the neighbourhood. And as I passed by a shop where these very necessary utensils, of all shapes and sizes, were displayed for sale, I was vividly reminded of that Potter's Shop where Old Khayyam, one evening at the close of Ramadan, ere the better Moon arose, with the clay Population round in rows, stood alone and overheard the impatient pot cry: "Who *is* the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

After registering at the Hotel Central I sallied forth for a before-supper stroll through the town. But there was nothing to see except two continuous streams of people promenading in close formation up and down and up and down the length of the main thoroughfare in front of the crowded cafés. Young bucks eternally rolling and smoking cigarettes, and señoritas eternally waving and clicking fans, predominated. It struck me as being rather a brainless way of spending an evening. For an hour or so I promenaded back and forth with the lazily talking promenaders, and for another hour or so sat sipping coffee with the lazily talking lookers-on, marvelling the while at the harmlessness and innocence and orderliness of all. Then, so stiff with boredom that I could with difficulty walk, I staggered back to the hotel to dispose of the course-after-course supper that there awaited me.

The following morning I left Andujar by the old bridge over the Guadalquivir. The long straight road, deep in dust and bordered here and there by palms, led past a field where tobacco was growing and another field where were thistles eight feet and more in height. The golden air was full of butterflies and moths. In a ditch I saw a great horned lizard. Reapers in sun-hats and gaudy coloured overalls sang in the wayside fields. I

## THE MELTED ROAD

passed an old roadmender dressed in blue shirt and yellow trousers, with his head bound in a red kerchief and rings in his ears, who might have been a pirate home on furlough from the Spanish Main. Ahead of me a tinkling caravan of panniered mules and asses was being urged along by wild-looking men in black and scarlet sashes who might have been some of Ali Baba's Forty Thieves. Then the road left the river levels to climb to the crest of a miles-long ridge of land, and thereafter it was olives, olives all the way.

This ridge of land came to a high end above a low plain where stood the one-street village of Villa del Rio, into which I descended and had dinner in a café-restaurant, an hour or so past noon. And the cock-eyed *mozo* who waited on me had to close the dining-room window shutters against the horde of small boys armed with stones who had 'welcomed' my arrival, and who, on my departure, would have given me as hearty a send-off, had not a couple of Civil Guards escorted me clear of the village.

By that time the intense heat of the sun had so melted the tar surface of the road that walking was a heartbreak. It was like trying to make one's way over hot glue. I stuck fast at every step and left in my wake a trail of inch-deep footprints; while as for my feet—well, you can imagine what a state these were in. Therefore when a little stream happened along, which it did presently, I forsook the road and for the next two or three hours remained happily paddling my tortured tootsies in the shade of the bridge.

Afterwards, in the comparative coolness of early evening, I took the road again, the tar surface changing before long to gravel and loose stones, which, though making for easier progress, proved equally as heating to the feet. However I just



grinned and bore it. The next village, Pedro Abad, was only fifteen kilometres further on. By sundown I would be there.

By sundown I was. With the Enemy sinking in a blaze of egg-yolk yellow in a grass-green sky beyond a shining bend of the Guadalquivir, I came limping painfully into Pedro Abad.

This village stands on either side of the main road, which serves as its main street, and is nearly as long as the lang toun o' Kirkcaldy. And all down the length of it the villagers were sitting on chairs and benches outside their doors, the menfolk smoking cigarettes and cigars, and the womenfolk gossiping ; and when they weren't sitting they were parading in twos and threes from one end to the other, occasionally halting midway to mingle with a crowd gathered round a man with a lottery wheel. A homely, neighbourly place, Pedro Abad, I thought, as I began walking down between the two rows of seated gossips, who eyed me as though I were the Man in the Moon come to earth.

Four mortal times I paraded that long street from end to end, running the gauntlet of those twin rows of staring eyes. Hotel, fonda, venta—there was none. I asked and asked, and though people directed me here, and people directed me there, I could find no place that had accommodation—except, that is, the posada. Four times I passed by its open door, where with his wife and kiddies sat the posadero ; and four times his eyes seemed to say : “ High and mighty, eh ? Too proud to stoop to enter a posada, eh ? Don't care to doss with riff-raff, eh ? Ah, but you'll have to come here, my cock. This is the only place. You'll come here—and like it ! ”

I did, too. The Spanish posada, as I have elsewhere told you, is not a posh place. It is low ; the

## PUTTING UP AT A POSADA

last resort of the benighted traveller ; on a par with a common lodging-house. Only muleteers and carriers and suchlike put up there, generally sleeping in the stable with their beasts. And the food they dish you out is coarse and unappetising : which is why I had avoided this particular posada. I wanted good grub and lots of it. The thought of dry bread and fried eggs—the usual fare in such places—of which I had had my bellyful, revolted me. However, there being no other place, I had no choice but to put my pride in my pocket along with my unlimited supply of money, and apply at the posada for a night's board and lodging.

" Yes, lodging thou canst have," said the posadero familiarly, lolling lazily in his chair ; " but thou canst have no food. We do not supply meals. Thou wilt have to forage for food elsewhere. —Thou hast money, man ? "

I told him yes.

" Then pay me now."

" How much ? "

" Five."

" Five ? Pesetas ? "

" Reales."

" Oh ! " Willingly I handed him the money. Five reales was equivalent to one peseta and twenty-five centimos—or sevenpence ha'penny. It was certainly cheap enough !

After that the posadero ignored me absolutely. I had to invite myself in to the covered yardway and offer myself a seat on a bale of rope, where I sat smoking for a while, looking out at the crowd of yokels surrounding the man with the lottery wheel, and noting that most of the men were dressed in cheap drill suits, some white, some a washed-out blue, which gave them the appearance of house-painters and window-cleaners, and that furthermore

the common headgear was the wide-brimmed Andalusian hat, and the common perfume the reek of aguardiente, pungent as ammonia fumes.

Hunger at last getting the better of me, I rose and went out in pursuit of grub, finally running that elusive commodity to earth in a little *tienda*, or shop, at the top end of the village. Although not much—merely a couple of oranges, three or four bread-rolls, a tin of sardines and another tin of bonito, and a bottle of beer—it sufficed. Then the need of bed manifesting itself in gargantuan yawns, I made my way back to the posada.

Here I found the posadero and his family seated round a common bowl from which they were supping. So down I sat again on the bale of rope until they finished, when I up and told mine host that I wished to be shown up to my room. But this didn't suit him.

"Patience, man," says he, waving me back to my bale, and going and seating himself once more by the doorway. "Patience. All in good time. Thou wilt be shown to thy room by-and-by. Truly, thou art in a mighty hurry."

Well, I sat, and he sat, and time passed, and a family of what looked like beggars came in, and, commandeering the bales of rope that littered the yardway, mine included, made themselves beds and fell loudly asleep, their snores drowning the noise of the mules and donkeys stabled in the inner yard. And the posadero made not a move until the village clock struck eleven (which it did twice, as though to drive the hour home; a phenomenon which I encountered often in Spain, although I have never seen it mentioned in guide-books. Nor could it have had anything to do with the twenty-four hour system, for on several occasions at noon I have heard twelve strike—then strike again. But, of course, I am not saying that all clocks in Spain strike twice.

## A JEWEL-BUILT CITY

I am only saying that those to which I happened to pay attention did so; a clock striking the hour being so common an occurrence that one seldom troubles to count the strokes).

The posadero, I repeat, made not a move until eleven o'clock had struck, when he told his wife that she had better see about preparing my room . . . and half an hour later he showed me upstairs to a bare little apartment with only a bed and a chair and a basin of water in it, and there relegated me, worn-out with waiting, to the mercies of Morpheus.

In the morning I quitted the posada betimes, without breakfast. But from a fritter-fryer in the street I bought sufficient churros to make good the deficit, and rapidly removed myself from Pedro Abad.

A few kilometres further on, a bit back from the road, a green hill crowned by a dazzling white town—El Carpio—tempted me to turn aside and explore its mysteries. It more than hinted of the Moor. I had caught sight of it the night before when its lights were lit, towering in the outer dark like something mystic, something wonderful: a mount of glowworms, a hill of stars, a jewel-built city pyramiding to the moon. But a whiff as from off hot middens and festering garbage heaps came to me in time, so that I hurriedly passed on, nose between finger and thumb.

Through choking dust and suffocating heat I padded the hoof a weary way over a barren, burnt-up countryside, on a road that ran straight ahead for miles without even a bush where I could shelter under, until, bending abruptly at right angles, it developed an avenue of trees, crossed the Guadalquivir on a bridge of marble, and landed me at noon in the village called The Inns of Alcolea.

But the inns, of which there were at least four, catered only for boozers. Barrels of drink I could

have, but not one crumb of bread—no, sir. If I wanted food, why, Cordova was only ten kilometres away. . . . So I quitted Alcolea in disgust, and at the double. For only fools stop to reason with a gang of small boys throwing stones and filth.

Straight for Cordova the road now made. On either hand a level grassy plain stretched away to low hills. Of shade from the terrible sun there was none. I struggled along in a daze, half beside myself with heat and hunger and thirst. Ever and again there would pass by, coming from the direction of Cordova, mounted men leading strings of horses. The great Cordova fair—*El Gran Feria de Nuestra Señora de la Salud*—accounted for these. I had seen in Alcolea posters announcing the fair.

String after string continued to pass by, and the lofty, superior mien of the caballeros, which had at first amused me, began latterly to get my goat. You ought to have seen the airs of them. Hand on hip and cigar in mouth, they rode grandly past, ignoring my greeting, as though, being mounted, they were nearer heaven than I, and therefore not to be addressed. And though this was goat-getting, yet the plight of some of the horses in charge of these beggars on horseback was much more so. With forefeet tightly tied together with rope hobbles, the poor beasts had to struggle along as best they could, hop by hop, sweating and panting, trying in vain to make up on their lords and masters, who, I suppose, like all who own horses and put bits into their tender mouths and dig spurs into them and lash them with whips and curse them and force them to carry them, considered themselves horse-lovers.

Well, I held my feelings in check as well as I was able, until there came along a case of horse-lovery more goat-getting than any yet. A mare was the

## THE WHITE MARE

victim : a magnificent cream-white creature with long flowing mane and tail, all fire and fight and nerve and sinew, hobbled like a galley slave, her coat foul with dust and sweat and blood, her eyes big with fright, her shapely limbs trembling ; hopping and rearing pitiably in the wake of a couple of mounted dandies who laughed and jested and cast neither glance nor thought behind.

" By heaven ! " I cried, whipping out a knife. " This is more than flesh and blood can stand. I'll show you, you horse-torturers ! I'll learn you, you bull-baiters, you coffee-swillers, you egg-eaters, you *hasta-mañana* Go-with-Godders ! I'll—I'll beano you ! "

Swiftly approaching the shackled beast where it stood momentarily halted, panting and heaving in the dust, I severed the rope hobbles at a single cut of the knife. And the mare shook herself and tossed her head. And I yelled at the caballeros, who turned round. And I gave the mare a resounding smack on the rump. And with a wild piercing whistling blast she reared aloft, gathered her splendid self together, bounded across the road, cleared the stone parapet of the aqueduct that thwarted her path with a prodigious leap, and galloped off free and far across the wide prairie, with nothing to stop her but the Sierra Nevada, a hundred miles away.

" The white mare has bolted, *señores y caballeros*, " I called to the two speechless riders, doffing my hat and bowing low in mockery. " Go after her—and go with God ! "

" *Ja ! ja !* " chimed in a strange voice. " Go after her—and go *mit Gott* ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! And not to-morrow, noble sirs, but now—*now* ! *Fort ! Auf denn* ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! "

Turning round I beheld two blond heads bobbing

above the top of the concrete casing of the aqueduct previously mentioned, which here runs alongside the road all the way into Cordova. German vagabundos !

There being an opening underneath the aqueduct, I crawled through and joined the fair-haired wanderers, to remain there with them two or three hours, yarning and smoking and eating. For they had tons of grub, these lucreless dead-beats, which they said they had bettled in Cordova and which they readily shared with me.

Kurt was the name of the one who had chimed in with his "*Ja ! ja !*" and his pal was called Otto. Like the soldier of the Legion who lay dying in Algiers, they hailed from Bingen—Bingen on the Rhine. Besides German they could speak Spanish, French, English, and Italian. After an exchange of passports they gave me an outline sketch of their travels afoot in Europe. Through Germany, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Jugo-Slavia, Italy, France, Spain, they had tramped together, at first with money, latterly living by their wits. Milking Consuls, they averred, was their speciality. Like yon other German whom I had talked with on the road to Madrid, these two had done time in an Andalusian prison for vagrancy. Their account of that time made my mouth water, as did their description of vagrant life on the Costa Brava and of how they had made hay while the sun shone during Holy Week at Seville. A hundred and fifty pesetas, they said, had been their share of a 'Spanish Prisoner' swindle which they had helped to put over at Barcelona. Yes, perfect picaroons, were Kurt and Otto. Don Raphael and Ambrose de Lamela were babes still wet behind the ears in comparison.

Long after the caballeros had disappeared over the distant horizon in pursuit of the white mare, we three continued to sit swapping reminiscences

## KURT AND OTTO

and watching the storks, of which there were a number in that place, sailing and circling on the wind in the blue above the prairie, their long legs hanging down. Then I tidied myself up, bade Kurt and Otto a regretful farewell, and made my way into Cordova.



## LAP THE NINETEENTH

### THE CITY OF THE CALIPHS

Into Cordova—Packed streets—The fair-ground—All the fun of the fair—In the great mosque—The Court of Oranges—Pondering on the past—The Moor and his works—His craft and science—The world's benefactor—Cordova in its golden prime—"Irám indeed is gone——"

THROUGH a warren of white-walled Moorish streets, extremely narrow and tortuous and cobbled, passing below sun-awnings and balconies hanging with scented blossoms or draped with the Paschal palm, and often stopping to look in through wrought-iron gates to green flowering patios paved with tilework where wells were and fountains played, I sought and at last found the main Plaza; and at the Hotel Simon in the Street of the Great Captain I put up for the week-end.

The town was *en fête*. From all parts people had thronged to Cordova for the fair, which had been going strong all week.

Holidaymakers so packed the streets between the main Plaza and the Campo de la Victoria westward of the city, where the fair-ground was, that one could have walked on their heads. Beaver-hatted priests, bare-shanked Moorish pedlars, plaided shepherds, soldier boys, Shock Police, Civil Guards, muleteers, ploughmen, drovers, water-sellers, tie-sellers, sweetmeat-sellers, toy-sellers, etc., mixed and mingled with holiday-attired citizens with large families. Yet save for the cries of the various

vendors and street-corner quacks, there was no shouting, no jostling, no rowdyism. A concourse of Quakers could not have been more orderly. Noticeably absent were gangs of animal-spirited youths and bexies of tomboys. Of that much boosted thing, Latin gaiety, I saw not a sign. And why? Because it is a more or less mythical quality—as more or less mythical as the meanness of the Scot or the Englishman's sense of fair play and sportsmanship.

Past the fair-ground ran a wide boulevard arched over for the occasion with row upon row of coloured electric bulbs; and to look down the length of this at nightfall when these were lit up, was like looking down an interminable hallway ceilinged with rainbow radiance. The trunks of the trees lining this boulevard, too, were twined with garlands of perfumed blossom, while among the palms and greenery of the Campo glowed Japanese lanterns, like tinted moons, amber and rose and emerald. It was like fairyland. And a wind, warm and fragrant, blew from the olive-clad slopes of the Sierra Morena dimly visible to the north beneath the stars.

Then, lining the walks of the Campo, were booths and side-shows of every description.

Here was all the fun of the fair: merry-go-rounds, swingboats, electric-motor rinks, coconut shies, dollies, lottery wheels, hoop-la, shooting saloons, boxing, palmists, silhouette cutters, Oriental dancers (for men only), Wall-of-death motor-cyclists, sweet-meat stalls, shellfish stands, ice-cream barrows, restaurant tents, doughnut and fritter joints, beer bars, milk booths, etc., etc. In the bandstand a military band played operatic selections. Amid the thronging crowds moved water-sellers crying "*Agua! Hay agua!*" and balloon-and-windmill men, besides the inevitable tie-sellers, lottery-ticket sellers, walk-

ing-stick sellers, and sundry mutilated mendicants and child beggars.

And up and down the resplendent boulevard, all of the time, kept rolling open carriages bearing well-to-do spectators. These were mostly duennas chaperoning señoritas dressed in gala costume. While the majority wore a white lace mantilla draped over a high back-comb, along with varicoloured fringed shawl and fan, quite a number wore short, close-fitting monkey jackets, scarlet sashes, black Andalusian sombreros tilted at a rakish angle, and a red or yellow flower in their oiled and scented hair. And now and again there would pass a carriage-load of bull-fighters, picadores and matadores, all in full bull-ring dress.

During my stay in Cordova (*Córdoba* in Spanish) the white heat was unbearable. As a consequence, for there is remarkably little to be seen in this one-time capital of the Moorish Empire in Spain, once the Athens of the West, I spent long hours in the coolest place I could find. This was the Mezquita, the great mosque, one of the wonders of the world, where nigh upon a thousand pillars of different kinds of marble, some smooth, some twisted into spirals, support arches and double-arches without end. It was like being in the depths of a wood, in a sacred forest, whose groves were God's temple. . . .

Or I would sit in the shade beside the Gate of Pardon in the outer court—the celebrated Court of Oranges—where rows of orange trees continue the system of pillars within the mosque, and where date-palms, tall as tenements, tower above the playing fountains and brimming basins where of old the Moslem worshippers were wont to make their ablutions. While women and girls filled their

## PONDERING ON THE PAST

pitchers from the gushing spouts, and guide-hounded tourists came and went, and beggars came but refused to go, I would sit and think—think—

“ Think, in this batter’d Caravanserai,  
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,  
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp  
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.”

And I would ponder on Cordova’s *Arabian Nights* past, and on the destiny and might of the Moor, who, twelve centuries back, had come, had seen, and had conquered, winning, in a single battle and a few no-account skirmishes, in less than two years, a kingdom which it had taken the Romans two hundred years to win, and which it was to take the armies of the Cross eight hundred years, and more than five thousand battles, to win back.

For an empire’s span the Moor occupied the Peninsula, his military power a menace to all Christendom, his galleys on every sea, his merchants trading in every mart between Africa and China, the splendour and magnificence of his dominion the wonder of the world, challenging the glory that was Greece, surpassing the grandeur that was Rome.

Upon the tenebrious night of the Dark Ages the sun of the Moor’s advent burst and shone in dazzling gorgeousness. It was as though he were the genius of the Aladdin lamp of destiny, conjured at a rub from fate to discover himself and work miracles. His was the Midas touch that turned everything to gold. At a stroke, the Aaron’s rod of his resourcefulness made rocks to pour forth fountains, deserts to blossom like the rose, palaces unparalleled to spring up overnight, mighty cities to rise from the dust and populate themselves and stagger mankind

with achievements, hitherto undreamt of, in every art, craft, and science.

The Moor took all knowledge for his province ; the attainments and accomplishments of Moorish scholars, chemists, astronomers, mathematicians, botanists, philosophers, poets, etc., etc., were vast and incalculable. He was as industrious as he was learned. As a craftsman he had no equal. His pottery ware, leatherwork, armour, jewellery, carpets, tapestries, silks, brocades, were celebrated throughout the world. As a husbandman none could approach him. His agricultural system was the most complex, scientific, and most perfect ever devised by man. In works of hydraulic engineering he was pre-eminent. He manipulated the reservoir, the well, the syphon, the sluice, and the aqueduct with inspired ingenuity and miraculous results. There was little that he did not know about the rotation of crops, the use of fertilisers, or stockbreeding. Versed in meteorology, he could foretell weather. His love of flowers amounted to a consuming passion, and in floral decoration he had no superior. In the distillation and refining of perfumes his skill was beyond compare. He excelled in fruit-growing and grafting. He introduced to Europe the date, the fig, the banana, the quince, the lemon, the strawberry, the mulberry, just as he introduced cotton, coffee, and sugar cane, such nuts as the pistachio and almond, such vegetables as spinach and asparagus, such cereals as rice, sesame, and buckwheat, and such spices and condiments as nutmeg, pepper, saffron, and cinnamon.

He was the pioneer of Western progress and civilisation. He, the infidel Moslem, exercised an ennobling and Christianising influence over the barbarous soldiery of the Cross, who sought, by vanquishing him, to make the world safe for Christi-

## THE WORLD'S BENEFACTOR

anity. Through the Moor, the Crusader, who was fast bringing that same Christianity into contempt with his bloodthirsty fanaticism, and rotting Europe with vice and disease, first made the acquaintance of the two things without which man cannot even begin to become civilised—namely, toilet soap and underwear.

Yes, the obligations the modern world is under to the Moor are legion ; far more than is generally realised. Our methods of government by law instead of by force are indirectly derived from the Moor. From him we borrowed some of our most important principles of finance and maritime law. We got our ideas about chivalry and politeness and social refinement from the same prolific source. He taught us that women are not chattels and that they have rights. Indeed, the status to which women in our own country are to-day restricted by legislation appears to disadvantage when compared with that enjoyed by them in Spanish Islam.

Again, it was the Moor who first pivoted the magnetic needle and so gave us the mariner's compass. For gunpowder and artillery we are further indebted to him. Our musical scale evolves indirectly from that used by the Moor, whose love of music and poetry was a ruling passion. Among other musical instruments, he invented the mandolin and the organ. He bequeathed to us various sports and not a few games, including chess, draughts, backgammon and playing-cards. The balance and the pendulum clock are his inventions. Almanacs were first introduced by him. He was the pioneer of modern street-paving, street-lighting, postal services, sanitation, hospital treatment for the sick, segregation for the mentally afflicted, and bandaging of wounds, as of countless other works in the cause of suffering humanity.

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

Evil was the day for Spain and the rest of Christendom that saw his end and heard his last sigh. From the hour when Tarik landed at Gibraltar to that when Boabdil surrendered the keys of the Alhambra at Granada, Europe was infinitely the better for the Moor's presence. His passing was a tragedy. We shall never look upon his like again.

“ They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep ;  
And Bahrá'm, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass  
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.”

Yet, fast asleep though he lie, in Cordova his spirit still lives and reigns. And well it might. This City of the Caliphs, Gem of the South and Bride of Andalusia, was the capital of the Moorish Empire. It surpassed all other cities in the world, save maybe Baghdad and Constantinople. It was the focal point of learning and culture. It was a place of holy pilgrimage, its shrine rivalling that at Mecca. Its wealth and luxury were the marvels of the age. Its inhabitants numbered a million ; it contained 300 mosques, 600 inns, 900 baths ; 20,000 of its people were booksellers ; it had a library of 600,000 books. . . .

Thus I would ponder, sitting in the shade beside the Gate of Pardon in the Orange Court of the eleven-hundred-year-old Mezquita—heathen temple, Mohammedan mosque, Christian cathedral—and meditate on the brief glory of the Moor and the everlasting mystery of man—

“ Irám indeed is gone with all its Rose,  
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ringed Cup where no one knows ;  
But still the Vine her ancient Ruby yields,  
And still a Garden by the Water blows.

“IRÁM INDEED IS GONE——”

Into this Universe, and *why* not knowing,  
Nor *whence*, like Water, willy-nilly flowing :

And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,  
I know not *whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

What, without asking, hither hurried *whence* ?  
And, without asking, *whither* hurried hence !

Another and another Cup to drown  
The Memory of this Impertinence ! ”



## LAP THE TWENTIETH

BY CACTUS AND PALM

In the sunbaked heights—Panning for cockles—Ecija—First lift in a motor—In Seville—The sights—El Nodo—The road to Cadiz—The Andalusian tongue—Eucalyptus trees—In Los Palacios—Open-air cinema show.

ON the morning of my departure from Cordova I left by way of the picturesque old bridge, the Puente Viejo, that spans the Guadalquivir where it flows past between islands and sandbars under the crumbling walls south of the city.

Outside the suburb on the far bank were encamped quite a number of people, gypsies and beggars and show-folk mostly ; and 'buses packed with visitors from Seville and the south were arriving fast. Here I halted just long enough to lay in a supply of fruit and to take a last look back across the yellow river to Cordova basking beneath its palms in the white sunlight ; then I struck south-westward over the barren, tawny hills in the direction of Ecija, a day's walk away.

High up in the sunbaked heights I passed a stream beside which a family were bivouacked. As the father and his two boys were engaged in what looked like panning for gold, I stopped to watch them. But it wasn't gold they were panning for, I soon saw, but cockles. Cockles ! The clay comprising the bed of the stream and both banks was simply stiff with cockles. These shellfish, which looked to me as though they had been there since the Flood,

lay not just on, but were deeply embedded in, the clay. And while the father dug out great chunks of this, his boys washed and dissolved them in the stream, then, collecting the cockles, threw them into the conical panniers of a burro standing by.

By dint of sign language mostly, for the cockle-gatherers' Spanish was of the *un*understandable Andalusian variety, I elicited the fact that the cockles were edible, and that there was a large market for them. Which astonished and revolted me greatly. And as I came away I thought uneasily of all the cockles I had eaten since coming to Spain. For cockles in the shell, served with saffron-tinted rice and chunks of meat, is a favourite dish with Spaniards. And—and it had been a favourite dish with me!

Past extensive fields of maize I toiled skyward to a breezy plateau that rolled unhindered to horizons and dim mountains far away. A hamlet, Aldea de Quintana, crowned a crest in the midst of this elevated plain, but I passed on, and in the afternoon made the village of La Carlota, similarly perched on a hill.

Here I dined on an omelette, meat, potatoes, fish and fruit, in a fonda down a back lane, where the waitress and a customer, thinking that I knew little Spanish, discussed me disparagingly before my face. But I got my own back. In Cordova a shop-keeper had palmed off on me a dud five-peseta piece, which, when rung, made as much rattle as a lump of dough or putty. So, tendering this to the waitress, I told her to keep the change—and hurried off before she had time to test it.

For miles now, all along the grass-bordered road at short intervals apart, were neat little whitewashed *casillas*, or cottages. Eucalyptus trees, and palms, and cactus, and olive groves, too, were numerous.

It was most pleasant. And on the green in front of each cottage there was always a whitewashed well-head surmounted by a whitewashed dome with a little square opening in it, like an Eskimo igloo. But these were not wells. They were ovens. When a housewife had bread to bake she made a fire inside the dome, then, sweeping aside the red-hot embers, she placed her dough on the hot stone, closed up the opening, and the confined heat did the rest.

As the miles passed, however, a change came over the whitewashed cottages. Roofs of thatch began gradually to oust tiled roofs, whitewashed walls by degrees shed their whitewash, stone was replaced by brushwood, and lo! the *casillas* were now *chozas*: huts made entirely of thatch. And although the extreme poverty of the tenants was only too apparent, yet the porch of every hut blazed with flowers. To enter some huts you had first to pass through a bower, nay a tunnel, of red roses.

At sunset the road brought me out across a wild, solitary *despoblado* to a lofty rim, whence, looking down into a low green valley watered length-long by a winding river, I espied the clustered roofs of Ecija; and by nightfall I was signing the register of the Hotel del Comercio on the Plaza de la Republica.

Ecija dates from Roman times. A corn and oil town, it stands on the Genil, a tributary of the Guadalquivir. A pleasant little burg it is, with its gardens and patios and river promenades. From its extreme heat in summer it has been nicknamed the *Sartén*, or Frying-pan, of Andalusia; the *Horno*, or Oven, of Andalusia, being Seville. —And that, I'm afraid, is all that there is to Ecija.

Hardly had I resumed the road next morning when a motorist pulled up and offered me a lift into Seville, and, lifts being rare things in Spain, and as

it would save me a two-days' march in blistering heat, with nothing to see but the monotonous olive groves that now lined the route, I promptly accepted, and off we drove.

On my assuring the motorist that I was not a German but a Scot, he showed interest. Speaking in English, he told me that he had been to Scotland ; that, in fact, he had motored all over it, and England, too, and all Europe, and North and South America, and Africa. For years, he said, he had been chauffeur to a Spanish big-wig, with whom he had travelled most of the world. For a foreigner his grasp of idiomatic English was astonishing. He knew precisely where and when to insert ' bloody ' and ' damn ' in a sentence. And when a foreigner knows that, he *knows* English. Also, his use of the unprintable cuss words was masterly and above criticism. He was a proper card.

A drive of about thirty miles through monotonous, uninteresting country brought us to the ancient Moorish town of Carmona.

" Perhaps in the whole of Spain," wrote Borrow, " there is scarcely a finer Moorish monument of antiquity than the eastern side of this town of Carmona, which occupies the brow of a lofty hill, and frowns over an extensive *vega*, or plain, which extends for leagues. Here rise tall and dusky walls, with square towers at short intervals, of so massive a structure that they would seem to bid defiance alike to the tooth of time and the hand of man."

But we didn't stop here. We hurtled through in a cloud of dust at a mile a minute, my companion merely indicating the romantic old place with a quick nod, that said plainer than words : " That's Carmona—that was ! " And twenty miles later we arrived in Seville.

Opposite the Alcazar gardens I got off, thanking

the Spaniard for the lift ; and as it was then one o'clock I invited him to join me at lunch, but he declined, saying that he had promised some friends in Triana (a suburb of Seville) to drop in for ' breakfast,' and that if he hurried he would be just in time ; whereupon, with a " So-long. See you maybe in Gibraltar ! " he parted from me.

Making my way through narrow, stifflingly hot streets, some of which had *toldos*, or awnings, drawn over them, I eventually found myself in that odd, pavementless, arcade-like thoroughfare called Sierpes, meaning Serpents, where no vehicular traffic is allowed. It is the principal street of Seville. And there I put up at a first-class hotel whose charge for bed and board was only five shillings a day.

My subsequent explorings of the city proved disillusioning. In vain I searched for that Old Seville I had long dreamt of : the Seville which Byron had raved over, and the beauties of whose magic scene had drawn from Borrow tears of rapture. Maybe the tram-cars, and the open-air cinemas, were to blame, I don't know, anyhow I found a far different Seville from that which I had fondly imagined I should find.

The place was lousy with loafers : whether workless idleonians or merely work-shy Andalusians, it was hard to tell. And I could not get walking for beggars, bootblacks, and would-be guides. The purlieus of the chief attractions—the Cathedral, the Giralda, and the Alcazar—were a-crawl with these pests. Tourists, too, abounded. Also, the heat affected me so that I could enthuse over nothing and find little of interest in anything. Indeed, most afternoons from one o'clock until six, when all the shops remained shut and few people ventured abroad, I stayed indoors, a victim to Andalusian languor.

Seville is one of the most ancient cities of Spain.

## IN SEVILLE

In Phœnician times it was a trading settlement, a connecting link between Cadiz and Cordova, known as Sephala, which name was later Romanised into Hispalis, and later still Arabianised into Ishbilia, whence Sibia, and so *Sevilla*, the modern Spanish name. Under the Romans it was a place of importance; Julius Cæsar made it his capital; in its vicinity were born the emperors Trajan, Hadrian, and Theodosius. Under the Goths and Vandals it was the chief town of southern Spain. Under the Moors it was the capital of Seville, one of the four kingdoms into which Andalusia was divided. Following the discovery of America it rose to great commercial importance as the seat of New World trade, but was subsequently eclipsed by Cadiz. To-day its history and its treasures of art and architecture render it one of the most interesting places in Europe—to those interested in history and art and architecture.

The Cathedral is said to be the largest Gothic church in the world. The square belfry tower, the Giralda, formerly the minaret whence the Faithful were called to prayer, is the dominant feature of Seville, and is ascended not by stairs but by a series of inclined planes, or ramps. The other remarkable tower, the Torre del Oro, or Tower of Gold, is a decagonal, keep-like structure on the quayside, which in its time has looked down on the caravels of Columbus and treasure-galleons from the Spanish Main. In days gone by it was joined by a wall to the Alcazar, the palace of the Moorish kings, which, with its magnificent halls and beautiful gardens, is comparable only to the Alhambra at Granada. King Peter the Cruel, who did much to preserve it, was a monarch who delighted in disguising himself and sallying forth into the streets at night in search of adventure, after the manner of Haroun Alraschid at Baghdad.

Other antiquities and sights which attract the visitor in Seville are Roman remains, old Moorish houses, the patios, or courtyards, for which the city is famed, various churches, the public gardens and promenades—the Paseo de las Delicias especially—museums and picture galleries—Velazquez and Murillo were both natives of Seville—the Plaza de Toros, where the best bull-fights in Spain are staged, and the religious dances and processions which take place during the Semana Santa, or Holy Week, at Easter-time.

One thing that caught my attention was the city's badge. It is on every post and lamp-standard and greets one's eye at every turn. El Nodo it is called, and it consists of a hieroglyphic, in form like the figure eight, flanked by the words *no* and *do*, thus: NO 8 DO. This quaint device, it appears, was given to Seville in the 13th century by Alonso the Learned in acknowledgment of the city's loyalty to him during the civil wars that followed the death of his sainted father, Ferdinand III., king of Leon and Castile. The 8 represents a twisted skein, or knot—*madexa*—so that the whole reads NO—*madexa*—DO, which is equivalent to *No m'ha dexado*, meaning: "It (the city) has not deserted me." You see the guides stopping to explain this to puzzled tourists.

As I said before, Seville disappointed me. I found it charmless, nondescript; not half as Moorish as Cordova, nor yet as Spanish as I had expected it would be. In fact—tell it not in Gath!—I found Seville extremely dull. Not a few little Dutch towns which I have since visited are brighter far than this Pearl of Andalusia. The streets, despite the continuous sunshine, were grey; and dust, not to say dirt, was abundant. The inhabitants seemed cast down about something. Nor was their attire any

way picturesque. When the menfolk weren't dressed like ordinary business men they were dressed like house-painters and window-cleaners, while what the womenfolk wore was in nowise different from what women wear in Britain; only a few—and these belonged to the better class—were to be seen with back-comb, mantilla, and fan.

No, the popular saying: "*Quien no ha visto Sevilla, no ha visto maravilla*,"<sup>1</sup> is certainly not applicable to modern Seville.

On the morning of my departure I experienced some difficulty in finding the proper road out. The people whom I asked to direct me to the highway that led to Cadiz persisted always in directing me to the railway station. They could not be made to understand that I was going to walk. Even the Guardia de Asalto who finally showed me the proper way—even he was unsure whether he had directed me right; he stood watching me and scratching his head in puzzlement until I was out of sight. For in Spain, remember, walking just simply isn't done. One strolls, one takes a turn, one promenades—but one does not walk. *No, señor!* One does not *walk*.

Past ornate factories and palatial villas I followed the tramlines to the outlying suburb of Bella Vista, and from then on it was empty, cactus-bordered, blazing white road all the way into the big white village of Dos Hermanas, ten miles from Seville.

After leisurely dining here in a fonda on olives, potatoes, omelette, red mullet, lamb chops, herb balls, oranges, bananas, peaches, white wine and black coffee (the bill for which amounted to two shillings), I continued through the incandescent day by palm and pine and cactus and eucalyptus trees and olive groves and luxuriant hedgerows, making south for Los Palacios, twenty miles from Seville.

<sup>1</sup> "Who hasn't seen Seville, has seen no wonder."



All around to the horizon rolled the wide pasture-lands that give to the district its name of Dehesa ; where it was, you may recall, that Borrow, when domiciled in Seville, was wont to ride of an evening, mounted on his fleet Arabian steed, Sidi Habismilk. And high above the brilliantly blue sky, sailing for long periods without flapping a pinion, two eagles kept vigil.

The heat was melting. I had to seek shelter from the sun every second kilometre or so. My thirst was agonising. My feet felt as though they were encased in boots made of red-hot iron. The tar covering the road was almost semi-liquid, so that I left tracks in it, as in moist sand. When I looked ahead I could see the blue surface shimmering like water wherein the wayside trees were plainly reflected, and whenever a laden donkey passed it caused this surface to shudder perceptively. It was the fiercest day yet. My soul yearned onward for Cadiz and the sea.

At the ventas along the way—where the bottled refreshment was kept immersed in tubs of water—I now heard spoken in all its impurity the true Andalusian tongue, which is to Castilian what Cockney English is to King's English, only far more so.

Know that while the Castiliano pronounces clearly every letter and syllable of a word, the Andaluz clips and omits in a manner most slovenly. For example, when I asked a ventero for a *refresco*, he corrected me, saying : " You mean *refre'co*." And instead of being greeted with " *Buenos dias* " and " *Buenas tardes*," I was greeted with " *Bueno' dia* " and " *Buena' tarde*." " *Adiós*," likewise, became " *Adió*." The same, too, with Good-bye. " *Vaya usted con Dios* " is the correct form, but these lazy Andalusians, using the familiar second person

## EUCALYPTUS TREES

singular, made one word of it, saying: "*Vé'tu'n'di*." And for Cadiz they said "*Cadi*," and for Seville "*Sevi*"a." Furthermore, instead of lisping the letters *c* and *z*, as Castilians do, they sibilated the one and buzzed the other. For instance, the word for beer, *cerveza*. The proper pronunciation of this is "*thervetha*," but these sons of the somnolent South pronounced it "*servezza*"—which, to tell you the truth, was good to hear, for I had never cottoned to the lisping business. I always felt a fool when ordering *thervetha*. It was like ordering a *thyphon* of *thoda*! —So that what with all that, and their corrupt grammar and colloquialisms and fantastic idioms besides, I experienced great difficulty in understanding, and being understood by, these people I was now come among.

Well, by easy stages I journeyed south toward Los Palacios, marvelling at the enormous height of the eucalyptus trees that in places bordered the road.

They were the tallest trees I have ever seen. Graceful and slender as cypresses, their light foliage continually quivering like that of aspens, they soared into the blue to neck-cracking heights. In Australia, to which country these trees are native and where they are called gum trees, they have been known to reach as high as 300 feet. A passing muleteer told me that they were known locally as 'fever' trees, from their oil being used with remedial effect in cases of fever; and just before coming into Los Palacios I encountered men unloading a cartload of the leaves and spreading them to dry on a platform elevated some ten feet or so from the ground; and the aromatic smell reminded me of a quart bottle of eucalyptus oil I spilt over myself once upon a time, while working behind the scenes in a London panel doctor's establishment. . . .

Los Palacios turned out to be a biggish village

down a bit from a cross-roads. Biggish as it was, however, it had neither inn nor hotel, so I had to be content with a *casa de huéspedes*, which a Civil Guard directed me to, and where the reckoning for supper, bed, and morning coffee, was the equivalent of two shillings.

Finding that supper would not be ready for an hour or more, I went for a stroll in the sunset. At the cross-roads, where some villagers were gathered, I noticed what I had failed to notice before, namely, an open-air cinema such as I had seen in Seville. It was simply a yard, open to the sky, fenced round with high palings and arranged with rows of chairs and a café table or two, with a large screen erected at one end. Admission was 75 centimos ( $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.), and the performance, I learned on enquiry, would begin when the night was dark enough.

Deciding to pay the place a visit after supper, I continued along a lane bordered on either side by closely planted cactus over six feet high, which served as a fence to various orange orchards and vineyards. And while great spiders' webs draped these prickly hedges, hanging like white veils out to dry, snails by the thousand crowded together on the thick, fleshy leaves, clustering so close that their massed shells presented the appearance of mosaic work. It was an eerie lane, that. And from far-off fields came labourers on donkeyback, padding past in silence in the twilight. And a couple of Civil Guards, stopping me and examining my credentials, which they could make neither head nor tail of, ordered me back to the village; it wasn't safe for me to be abroad, they said; so I retraced my steps to the *casa de huéspedes*.

When I came out again after supper I found I didn't need to go to the cinema, because the cinema had come to me. Believe it or not, a large screen

## OPEN-AIR CINEMA SHOW

had been erected across the width of the village main street, and a free cinema performance was about to begin. Villagers in happy mood strolled up and down, or sat on chairs along either kerb, or hung over house balconies, gossiping and exchanging greetings as neighbourly as could be. In a wooden box scarcely bigger than a sentry box the cinematograph operator struggled manfully with technical difficulties. Among the crowd wandered the jest of the evening : a boy bearing a notice to the effect that the price of admission to the cross-roads cinema had been lowered for that one night to 70 centimos !

After several false starts the performance began. The picture shown was an old-time three-part melodrama, of German make, concerning an unjustly accused younger son who goes out to the Yukon and performs prodigies : knocking out bar-room bullies, pursuing sleigh-borne claim-jumpers across trackless snows, fighting off wolves, braving death to save life, and discovering Bonanzas ; and who returns just in time to redeem the mortgage on his ancestral home and stop his beloved from marrying the cause of all the trouble. It carried me right back to early film days. I thrilled again to the once-familiar caption : " Part two will follow immediately." With the wildly excited crowd I cheered the hero and hissed the villain, and cursed and laughed at the operator when the sub-titles of one part appeared in reverse so that we could not read them. In short, it was the best cinema show I had witnessed for years. And all the while in the velvety sky the Andalusian stars looked brightly down and the Spanish moon laughed and seemed to sing a song.

It was late when I got to bed, and later still when I fell asleep, for the villagers remained outdoors hours after the show, walking and talking and listening to a guitar ; making hay, so to speak, while the moon shone.

## LAP THE TWENTY-FIRST

### TO CADIZ AND BLUE WATER

A vacant plain—Harbourage—Sign language—A strange tongue  
—Jerez de la Frontera—The *novillada*—Boy *versus* bull—  
An unkillable beast—The sea !—In Puerto Real—All set for  
Cadiz—The Isle of Leon—Cadiz by the sea.

FROM Los Palacios my way lay south across a boundless, treeless plain along a broad, straight road surfaced with concrete.

For mile after mile all I had to look at was vacant grass-flats and marshlands. So lonely and bereft of life were the illimitable levels that at times I felt positively scared. The sole novelties I encountered were a waterless river, a railroad where no trains ran, and another waterless river. The only living creatures I met were two mounted Municipal Guards escorting between them a man in handcuffs, and later, a peasant leading a string of donkeys laden with green water-melons. And, needless to say, the sun burned incessantly in a cloudless sky and extreme thirst tortured me.

As forenoon gave place to afternoon the grasslands ended and cornlands began, rolling southward towards a region of low hills. And away in the south-west, like an island peak upon a sea, rose a green hill topped by a white town: Las Cabezas, where the sugar-cane grows. And time passed and the road began to ascend into the hills.

Here were olive and eucalyptus groves, while at wide distances apart farmhouses dotted the land-

## H A R B O U R A G E

scape. In a little shop by the wayside I managed to procure bread and cheese and a handful of dates, which frugal rations seemed a banquet, for I had had nothing to eat since Los Palacios, where only a tumblerful of coffee had been given me for breakfast, and my hunger had been such that the grasshoppers which I came upon in great numbers feasting on the run-over carcasses of their kind on the open road, had awakened in me envy and regret that I couldn't do likewise.

Darkness found me benighted in the hills, speeding hell-for-leather along the switchback road. At a cross-roads a sign informed me that the town of Lebrija lay eight kilometres to the west, but I continued south, instinct telling me that harbourage was close at hand. Nor did instinct lie. Presently a light appeared ahead, and gradually a huge castle-like structure loomed out of the dusk. Leaving the highway I struck hopefully across a stubble-field and soon arrived at the place.

It was a farmstead. Of enormous dimension, standing foursquare to all the winds, its rough stone walls were as massive and strong as those of a fortress. It reminded me of a Border peel. A few window-holes, deep and very small, pierced the main outer side, and the only means of entrance to the inner courtyard was through an arched gateway fitted with ponderous, iron-studded double-doors. Here, sitting skylarking on a stone bench, were three lively young farmer lads.

"Good evenings," said I, in generous Castilian style.

"Good evening," replied the lads, in the stingy manner of Andalusia. And there the conversation terminated. For try as I would I could not make them understand by word of mouth what I wanted, nor could I understand what they answered. My

Castilian was to them what their Andalusian was to me—namely, Greek. In the long run, however, by dint of repeating the word *posada*, and folding my hands and laying them under my sideways-tilted head—which dumb play is illustrative of sleep the world over—I managed to make myself intelligible to one of the lads.

“*Pothada!*” he cried, in high glee at penetrating my meaning. “*Thi, theñor! Pothada! Thi, thi!*” and running into the inner courtyard he fetched out the farmer himself.

Thereupon ensued a prolonged palaver, mainly in sign language. Nor could anything have better demonstrated how civilisation has complicated human relationship and made foreigners of us all. For although we could say “Hello” to each other merely by exchanging nods, yet to signal “How are you?” was entirely beyond us. And although by one look the farmer showed he appreciated my requirements, yet it took him fully ten minutes’ exhaustive gesticulation to convey to me his need to scrutinise my credentials.

When my passport had been perused by him and the three lads in turn, I was motioned to take a seat, and in due course a hunk of dry bread and an enormous jar of water were brought out for my regalement; then the farmer went in and left us; and for an hour or more we sat there in the misty moonlight under the grim walls overlooking vast corrals where cattle moved and lowed, the lads talking amongst themselves in their strange lisping tongue.

It was the most singular jargon I have ever listened to. The total absence of sibilants made it unique. Besides not hissing and buzzing their *c*’s and *z*’s, like the majority of Andalusians, these boys either lisped their *s*’s or omitted them alto-

gether, saying "*thi*" for "*si*," "*theñor*" for "*señor*," and "*Ethpaña*" and "*E'paña*" for "*España*." Also, their substitution of *b* for *v*, and vice versa, was another noteworthy feature. It served to confound what was already confused. Hence, although now and again I caught a word I knew the meaning of, yet the drift of the lads' conversation was away over my head. They might have been discussing me or the price of beef for all I was aware.

The hour of bedtime arriving, the three showed me into a great stone chamber to the left of the main gateway. A lofty-ceilinged dungeon of a place this was, lit by a solitary rushlight, with no windows and only one little door, where on the broad stone bench that ran round the four walls were arranged coarse sacks filled with chaff to serve as beds. And on these the farmer lads flung themselves down fully dressed, and almost instantly fell asleep. Nor was I slow or loath to follow their example, having frequently slept in tramp-wards that were far more comfortless.

When I opened my eyes again it was to find my bedfellows already up and off and a great red dawn framing itself in the open doorway. As bread and water had been left for me, I breakfasted and went out to be met by the farmer, who with a smile waved aside the money I offered him, so I thanked him and said goodbye and resumed the road.

A few kilometres later I came to a village, *Ventas de Something or other*, where I broke my fast anew on sardines and rolls and cheese and hot chocolate, and was shaved besides by a tipsy barber with half the villagers looking on; after which, feeling a new man, I put my best foot forward for Jerez de la Frontera, twenty miles to the southward.

The country was open and hilly, with cornfields and olive haciendas giving place occasionally to



moors knee-deep in dwarf palmetto and dotted with pine. Clouds overcast the sky and some rain fell, but in the afternoon the weather cleared, the sun blazed forth, and I was thankful for the shade of the tall trees that lined the road the rest of the way into Jerez.

This Jerez, formerly Xeres—called ‘of the frontier’ to distinguish it from Jerez de los Caballeros in Estremadura—is the wine town that gives its name to sherry, or, as Falstaff more correctly termed the drink, sherris. Its wine vaults, *bodegas*, constitute the major sights—to those interested in the putrefied juice of the grape; while a Cathedral, an Alcazar, a tower or two and several mossgrown churches, constitute the minor sights. For an Andalusian town it is remarkably clean and tidy, even sweet-smelling; most of the houses are whitewashed and possess patios, whose cool greenery relieves and delights the eye; and the tall palms planted in the main Plaza impart an Eastern picturesqueness, which, however, is somewhat marred by the crowds of cigarette-smoking natives dressed like house-painters and window-cleaners who habitually hang about there, mostly cursing their luck in the last lottery.

In a bright little hotel overlooking the busy market I put up for the week-end, after filling in a registration form longer and more intimate than any I had yet filled in; and though the food was good and plentiful and the charge reasonable, the dilatory service made my stay a purgatory. I wasted half the time waiting for meals, which were usually served two or three hours after the advertised meal-time, and I had to sit up half the night waiting for the maid to prepare my bed!

A bull-fight was billed to take place in the Plaza de Toros on the Sunday afternoon, so I bought a three-peseta ticket entitling me to a seat in the Shade,

## THE NOVILLADA

and waited impatiently for the hour of the performance to arrive.

To be honest, I wanted to see if what I had seen at the bull-fight in Madrid were actually true and not just something I had imagined. Yes, I wanted to make sure that the reeking puddings I had seen bursting from the gored horses' bellies were actually the horses' stomachs, and that the trailing string-sausages I had seen the horses tripping over as they staggered from the arena were actually the horses' bowels. For it was all so monstrous that I distrusted my memory. It was all so nightmarishly hideous that I just had to go again, irresistibly impelled by the horrible fascination of the thing, to see what I shrank from seeing.

But fortunately, or unfortunately, for I honestly cannot say that my relief exceeded my disappointment, the infamous phase of the bull-fight, the *Suerte de Picar*, was excluded from this Jerez affair, which was not a *corrida* proper, but only a *novillada*. No horses took part; all the performers were on foot. Still, even minus this all-important item, the fight was not without its thrills. Indeed, in daredevilry the toreros far outdid those I had seen at Madrid; while as to the spectators—well, Jerezaños are to Madrileños what molten lava is to ice. At times I feared that the Plaza would collapse beneath the thunder of their enthusiasm, or blow up in spontaneous combustion from the heat of their ardour.

Of the three espadas—advertised as being *valientes diestros*—two came from Seville and one from Madrid. And the utterly contemptuous manner in which they played their bulls sent everybody into transports. It was a sight to see. The charging, pain-maddened, bellowing beasts might have been mere infuriated gnats for all the concern they

appeared to cause the espadas. No matter how hard pressed the men were, they never once broke and ran. With them it was dignity first, safety last. The principal swordsman, a consummate artist in the delivery of the *estoque*, brought the house down by killing outright, at the initial thrust, three out of the six bulls in succession. You ought to have heard the din, and seen how the spectators rose to their feet as one man. Hats were tossed down into the arena and the espada with his attendant chulos ran in triumph round the ring, throwing the hats back. One enthusiast even leapt the barrier and embraced the hero !

The second espada was less fortunate. Ill luck seemed to dog him. Time and again he slipped on the blood-soaked sand and lay at the bull's mercy. At last, barely able to stand from his injuries, he threw his hat into the middle of the arena with a do-or-die gesture, tackled the bull, and just managed to deliver the death-thrust before sinking helpless to the ground. His pluck evoked applause, but he was too far gone to acknowledge the cheers, merely waving a weak hand as the attendants carried him out.

Midway through the fight a young boy created a sensation by leaping the barrier and facing up to the bull, when it was seen that he was equipped with a home-made muleta and a barbed dart such as banderilleros use. But alas, his nerve failed him at the crucial moment, and he turned tail and fled before the charging beast. And had not a chulo pulled him in behind a board shelter in the nick of time, the bull would assuredly have got him. But though I laughed at this comic interlude, nobody else laughed. The Spaniards, it was obvious, saw nothing to laugh at in a youngster bursting to be a bull-fighter. To them it was quite a natural am-

bition. Wasn't every normal Spanish boy bursting to be a bull-fighter? Didn't they themselves often wrestle with the impulse to leap the barrier and demonstrate to the toreros just how a bull should be handled, eh? Sure! Then, Holy Mother of God, why laugh?

Nor was this boy-*versus*-bull interlude the only unusuality that occurred. Towards the end an espada so far forgot his professional self as to lose his temper, and, vaulting the barrier, he offered to fight a barracker who had thrown a cushion at him. Six times the espada had essayed to kill his bull, and six times he had badly muffed it. Nor did he ultimately succeed in killing the bull. The beast flatly refused to be killed, and as flatly refused to retire from the arena. The toreros waxed hysterical. The spectators booed and cat-called and rained cushions on the ring. But still the bull defied alike the espada's sword and the cajolements of the capeadores. Then before I knew how it came about, there appeared in the middle of things the most comical-looking beast I have ever clapped eyes on.

It was an ox, a tame ox, with huge splay feet, enormous curling horns, and a hide the colour of mustard: not unlike the sort of quadruped you see capering about the stage in Christmas pantomimes; and round its neck it wore a broad leather collar from which hung a large bell that tolled and jangled ludicrously with the beast's every movement. I nearly died. At first I imagined it was a 'property' cow let loose in mockery of the luckless espada, and expected it to break into a brisk step-dance any minute. But no, it was the genuine article: a *cabestro*, or bell-ox, such as is used as a means of inducement when driving the consignment of fighting bulls to the Plaza de Toros the day before the fight.

But even this failed to entice the unkillable bull

from the arena. Bellowing his wrath, he charged down on the decoy, making it run for its life, and at the same time cleared the entire ring of toreros, while the audience stood and cheered him to the echo with cries of "*Viva toro! Bravo toro!*" and paid him the highest compliment payable to a bull by calling him 'a brave man.' Then after trotting once round the ring, as if acknowledging the applause, the valiant animal halted under the president's box, gave a snort of triumph—and calmly left the arena of his own accord.

Quitting Jerez early on the morning following the bull-fight, I pursued the uninteresting road south-westward till I came to a high-lying ridge of land, where I sat down and let my unrestricted gaze wander away below.

In the middle distance lay the clustered town of Puerto de Santa Maria, a patch of white in the green landscape, while, beyond, a long line of grey above a long line of blue paralleled the horizon. And as I continued gazing I gradually made out four tall mast-like erections soaring skyward near the western extremity of the long line of grey, and further west, a white mass glittering in the sun. Whereupon, a thought suddenly striking me, I jumped to my feet and let out a yell. In delight I tossed my hat sky-high. For I was there! I had arrived! After long, long hundreds of miles of inland travel, I was at last come within sight of the sea. The sea! For if that line of blue was the waters of a bay, as it must be, then that line of grey was land—a promontory—and the white mass glittering in the sun was a city. Cadiz! Cadiz by the sea!

In jubilant spirits I took the road, and midday met me by the statue of Christ at the Santa Maria cross-roads, whence I passed down the long white

street of the town, glimpsing palm-framed sea-vistas in the passing, and so to a tasty dinner of tripe *á la Catalana* in a restaurant where tips were forbidden.

By the way, if you are interested, it was in the Plaza de Toros of this little seaport of St. Mary that the bull-fight, staged in honour of the Duke of Wellington, took place, which Lord Byron describes in *Don Juan*—

“ Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,  
Nor shrinks the female eye, nor e'en affects to mourn.

Another—odious sight !—unseamed appears,  
His gory chest unveils life's panting source.”

—demonstrating that he knew as little of bull-fighting as most of us foreigners ; for in one place he confuses the capeador with the espada.

Following a prolonged after-dinner laze in the shade of palms on the esplanade, greedily snuffing the tangy airs and watching lateen sails tacking across the outer bay, I crossed the bridge over the mouth of the Guadalete river and began the long march round the inner bay towards Cadiz.

But whether it was through over-indulgence in the tripe *á la Catalana* (which is stewed tripe with potatoes, onions, and tomatoes), or through mere leg-weariness, I don't know, anyhow I made so little headway that when I reached the village of Puerto Real, two or three miles further on, it was already evening ; wherefore I decided to stop there overnight.

This was easier decided than done, though. Even with the aid of a small boy whom I hired to pilot me to the various fondas—there being no hotel—it took more than an hour's exhaustive search to

run to earth harbourage : and that in a posada, too, where sleeping accommodation only was provided. However, in a neighbouring bar-restaurant I managed to dig up a supper of sorts ; finishing in time to go and watch the sunset as it ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay.

Puerto Real lies at the head of an inlet of the big land-locked inner bay of Cadiz, looking across the windy water to the town of San Fernando opposite. A dirty tidal shore fronts it, dreary *marismas*, or marshes, flank it, and its rectangularly laid-out streets are narrow and squalid. A more nondescript place would be hard to find. Yet in other days Julius Cæsar's galleys rode at anchor off that beach, wildfowl from those rushy flats wheeled wonderingly above Sir Francis Drake 'singeing His Catholic Majesty's beard' nearby, and that same salt wind whistled in the tattered rigging of tall ships of the line that were French runaways fled thither from Trafalgar.

Thus I mused, wandering on the shore while the moon and stars came out and the lights of San Fernando zigzagged in the dark bay and the distant glow that was Cadiz lit up the western sky. But not for long was I let wander. Presently two armed men in uniform materialised out of the night, questioned me closely, examined my passport, then, telling me which was the shortest route back to the village, advised me to return. Which advice I took. For the men were of the corps of Carabineros, the force that patrols the coasts and frontiers. They knew what was best for me ; and so did I.

After a sleepless night in a flea-infested bed in an enormous mediæval-like chamber at the posada, I left Puerto Real early next morning, all set for Cadiz.

In a gradual bend the road followed the curve of the bay eastward, southward, then westward,

for eight miles or more, over marshy levels which, in the vicinity of San Fernando, were dotted, as with the tents of a vast army, with countless cones and pyramids, some as high as a house, of dazzlingly white sea-salt, amongst which men could be seen at work, gathering the stuff from the evaporating 'pans,' piling it in the sun to dry, and loading it on panniered mules and donkeys.

As to San Fernando itself, it lay directly ahead, the white mass of its flat-roofed houses topping a slight eminence. With the fierce sun focussed full on it, and a deep-blue luminous sky glowing softly behind, it reminded one of a Biblical city. And in front, crossed by a high and narrow bridge of age-corroded stone—the Bridge of Zuazo—on the parapet of which men and boys sat fishing with unusually long rods, flowed a broad canal-like river.

This river, if river it can be called, is the Santi Petri. Joining as it does the inner bay of Cadiz with the ocean, it makes an island of what otherwise would be a peninsula: an island, triangular in shape, measuring roughly eight miles from north to south where its base parallels the mainland, and about four miles across to the apex on the west side, whence juts out for some six or seven miles in a north-westerly direction a long narrow spit of land at the extreme end of which stands the city of Cadiz.

To this Isle of Leon, as the island is called, I now crossed, and presently arrived in San Fernando, the island capital.

A busy, populous town I found this, somewhat Italian in aspect, but holding little of interest. Its outlying suburb of La Carraca is a naval arsenal of considerable importance, and both are linked up with Cadiz by railroad and tramway.

From here, where I stopped for dinner, I followed the road across the island westward, eventually



coming out upon the long and narrow spit of land aforementioned. This reminded me of Tennyson's "On one side lay the ocean, and on one lay a great water," which words describe it exactly. While on the right lies Cadiz Bay, six miles across and thirty in circumference, on the left lies the wide ocean. And so very narrow is the spit that there is room only for the highway and the railway to ride abreast ; the tramway riding on its own along the open sands of the beach not far above high-water mark.

Along this wave-washed causeway I toiled in the broiling sun, lost in admiration of the deep emerald colour of both waters, of the azure of the sky, and of the farness of the horizon. Motors so crowded the road that I climbed very willingly over the railway to the solitude of the miles-long shore, and thereafter walked barefoot on the edge of the tide.

In time the spit widened, houses appeared, and quitting the beach for the road I passed through a long suburb which petered out on to waste ground where were old-time bastions of hewn stone and a low and narrow fortified gateway, like a castle gateway, giving access to Cadiz city.

Various armed guards and toll-men hung about here, but they let me pass unchallenged, and, following the road as it wound down between tall tenement houses, I soon found myself by the harbourside.

A glittering, sun-spangled blue bay dotted with ships at anchor, and small boats plying ; big ocean liners in dock being loaded and unloaded ; green flowering gardens with walks ; ship-chandlers' stores, money exchanges, and the smell of tarry rope and brine ; broad, awninged pavements crowded with innumerable café tables at which sat sailors in blue, sailors in white, and sailors in shore togs, smoking and drinking coffee and iced beer ; a babble of different tongues, a jangle of tram-cars, a hooting of

## CADIZ BY THE SEA

motor horns ; many-storeyed houses with balconies, sun-blinds, and flat roofs ; long, narrow, canyon-like streets ; bright shops, bright people, bright everything ; cleanliness and tidiness predominating. So Cadiz impressed me.

In the Calle de San Francisco, a long street at the back of the front, I found quarters in the Hotel Cataluña (rate : four shillings a day inclusive, and the meals first-class, six-course affairs), where my bedroom, several storeys up, was an eyrie whence I could look out far across the rooftops to the sea, and far down into the dim depths of the narrow *calle* below, as one looks down into a mountain gorge a-roar with rapids.

Cadiz (anciently Gadir and Gades) is reputed to be the oldest city in Europe, having been founded as far back as 1100 years before Christ by Phœnicians, whose mart it was for English tin and Baltic amber. Since then it has repeatedly waxed and waned in wealth and importance like a pharos light, at times dying out altogether only to rise again phœnix-wise from its ashes. To-day its appearance is that of a newly built city. Dazzlingly white and clean, it stands on its narrow rock above the blue sea, which laves its walls on all sides except the east. Like New York, as it cannot expand outward, it expands upward, hence the tall buildings and narrow streets ; and the latter, intersecting each other at right angles, and seeming to the stranger to be all alike, make of the interior town a maze wherein one can wander completely lost for hours, although a sharp five-to-ten minutes' walk will carry the initiated from one side of the town to the other.

Save for the Old and New cathedrals and one or two public buildings, and the signal tower, La Torre de la Vigia, there are no noteworthy sights. But the site of Cadiz is sight enough. One never tires of

## TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

walking on the high sea-walls and bastions, where men and boys eternally fish for mullet with great cane rods, or of strolling in the lovely Parque Genoves amid the palms and grottoes and playing fountains, or of sitting in the harbourside cafés watching the ships and sailors come and go.

At one place, jutting far out into the sea like a breakwater, is a reef with a fort and lighthouse on its extreme point. I used to walk out here and sit looking back at Cadiz, thinking with the poet :

“ Fair is proud Seville, let her country boast  
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days,  
But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast  
Calls forth a sweeter praise.

“ Ultima Thule ! Utmost Isle !  
Here in thy harbours for awhile  
We lower our sails ; awhile we rest  
From the unending, endless quest.”

## LAP THE TWENTY-SECOND

### SUNSET OVER AFRICA

A catastrophic discovery—Dinner in Chiclana—The *era*—A hilltop town—Vejer—Taken for a tramp—"Inside rapid!"—The road to Tarifa—Villainy at a venta—A corner in foreign currency—The hills of Africa!

AH, but there is no rest for the wicked, especially the wandering wicked.

I hadn't been a couple of days in Cadiz when, happening to go into my pack for something, can you guess what I found? can you imagine what I discovered?

Well, believe it or not, I—— But prepare yourself for a shock. You cannot have forgotten—indeed, possibly I may have put your back up by repeatedly calling on you to remember—my unlimited supply of money. Yes? I thought so! Well, happening to go into my pack for something, I—in short, not to put too fine a point on it, I—I actually felt, brought to light, and beheld with speechless incredulity, the—the *limit* of that unlimited supply!

So catastrophic a discovery made my knees knock together. For if it was a far cry to Gibraltar, and a further one to Marseilles, whither I designed to go by boat, it was positively an immeasurable howl to Paris and Tramp-Regal Lodge, London. . . . But, thanks be, subsequent inspection checked my rising hysteria, put my panic to rout, exterminated my fears. I found I had money enough and even to spare.

Nevertheless I pulled out from Cadiz on the morning immediately following. By tram I retraced my way back over the long spit of land to San Fernando and the mainland, finding it a novel and delightful experience so to travel along a desolate Atlantic beach, with breaking combers crashing within a stone's throw and blown sand pinging against the window panes.

Once back on the mainland I made short work of the five-mile stretch of road into Chiclana: a cheery little township of whitewashed houses set in the midst of a cultivated plain. Here, after vainly seeking a fonda, I hired a boy and he conducted me to what he averred was the recognised eating-place for travellers; namely, a tiny greengrocer's shop in a back lane kept by an old woman.

It was more a booth than a shop, and so cramped for room that there was just space for a cooking stove, a table, and two chairs, the greengroceries being displayed on a bench on the pavement. And so stifflingly hot and so a-buzz with flies was the interior that the first thing the old woman did was to hand me a fan! So while she cooked my dinner I sat with the sweat streaming down me and the winged pests settling on me *en masse*, vigorously fanning myself and trying to appear unconscious of the curious gaze of the boys and girls and adult idlers who had gathered in the doorway to watch the foreigner being fed.

In due course, after laying out bread, olives, a bottle of red wine, and a snow-white napkin, the old woman served me with a brimming plateful of mint-flavoured soup containing pieces of bread and small peas; next, with a leg of chicken in a mess of saffron-tinted rice flavoured with cinnamon; after that, with delicious golden-red mullet fried in oil and garnished with lettuce and a slice of lemon;

and lastly with half a dozen luscious green pears with blood-red hearts.

The bill for this amounted to five pesetas, which I paid, then took my departure. But I had not gone far when, missing my stick which I had forgotten, I returned, and behold! there, with half the village looking on, was the old woman down on her knees in the street, busy ringing the five silver pieces on the cobbles!

From Chiclana the rolling, tree-lined road struck south-eastward, paralleling the coast about a league inland. Widely cultivated and sparsely sprinkled with farmsteads, the countryside lay parched and tawny-coloured under the baking sun. Walking was a tedious, sweaty business. The monotonous uneventfulness of the miles made an old man of me temporarily.

At one place, where farm buildings adjoined the road, I came upon a thing about which I had often heard but until then hadn't encountered. I mean an *era*, or primitive threshing floor.

Imagine a wide circle of level ground paved with cobblestones, in the centre of which stands a man holding the reins of several mares who are trotting in single file round and round the outer edge, like circus horses being put through their paces by a ringmaster. Well, that is what I came upon. That is the *era*. And a second man was engaged in strewing corn in the path of the trotting mares, who thus threshed the grain, the chaff blowing away on the breeze. It is a method as old almost as human history.

The afternoon passed with the miles, and the land grew wilder. Extensive tracts of aromatic pinewoods occurred frequently, as did dense jungles of snake-infested brushwood and palmetto. For long stretches eucalyptus trees bordered the road, and of ventas

there were quite a number. I caught a glimpse of the sea only once, far-glittering in the south. With the advent of evening the land heaved into green hills and sank into greener valleys clothed with woodlands, the road rising and falling and looping in serpentine fashion.

Emerging from behind an eminence I all of a sudden came within view of two high hills close together, tinged rose-red with the sunset, in the nick between which appeared what looked like a patch of snow. But it wasn't snow. It was a town, actually a town, built upon the saddle joining the two peaks, and so far aloft above the underlying plain that the clustering whitewashed dwellings resembled a snowdrift lodged in the nick.

"In the name of heaven," I asked of a woodcutter, who happened to be passing with a donkeyload of faggots, "what town is that?"

"Vejer," he told me.

"Vejar? Why, that means 'to vex,' doesn't it? A good name, too. It lies a vexatious height up, does Vejar."

"Not Vejar, man," said the woodcutter, "but Vejer—*V-e-j-e-r*."

"Oh. There's a posada there, I suppose?"

"Yes. But if it is only a posada you want, there is one along the road a bit."

"I think I'll climb, nevertheless. Where is the way up?"

"Yonder." The woodcutter pointed ahead, and following his finger I saw where a branch road struck up along the hill-face in a long, rapidly-ascending gradient to Vejer. It looked all of an hour's back-breaking climb.

"There is no other road?"

"One other. But it is twice as steep."

Thanking the man, I continued along two more

loops of the highway, and presently arrived at the soaring branch road, which I immediately tackled.

In the swiftly failing light I climbed and climbed and better climbed, right up and up, with numberless halts to draw breath and let my boiling blood cool down, right up and up towards where the lights of the dizzy town twinkled like stars at God's gate. And after about an hour's backbreaking toil I attained the airy terrace of my goal, coming in the dark night into the narrow, crooked, steeply sloping Moorish lanes of Vejer.

"An hotel. I'm looking for an hotel," I explained to a Civil Guard whom my appearance in the little Plaza of the place brought to my side. "*Hay hotel aquí?*"

"Yes," he replied, looking me up and down in a dubious manner; "there is an hotel. *Por aquí.*"

He turned and I followed him in silence through an intricate maze of cobbled wynds and alleyways that presently landed us in front of a big white building with an imposing façade and a lit-up clock tower; which building did not look at all like an hotel to me. Still, thanking the Guardia, I mounted the broad stone staircase leading up to the iron-studded main door, upon which I proceeded to rap noisily with my stick.

"Hi!" cried up the Guardia in some alarm. "Don't do that. You'll have to wait!"

"Wait?" I called down in surprise. "Wait what for?"

"For the porter. —Oh, here he comes!"

Wondering what sort of hotel this was that kept its door locked against guests, I waited while the porter—a peasant-looking man with a limp and a bunch of keys—enquired of the Guardia what it was I wanted.

This the Guardia explained at great length, but



in a hushed voice so that I could not hear ; whereupon, apparently satisfied, the porter mounted leisurely to where I waited by the door, and leisurely looked me up and down in profound contempt before inserting the key. Then as the door swung open and I made to push past him, he roughly thrust me aside with his elbow and growled out for me to let him enter first ; which I did, my wonderment deepening, and feeling somehow that I was a tramp again and that the porter was a tramp-major ushering me into the tramp-ward of a workhouse.

Once inside, the porter preceded me to a little office, where he sat down before a table littered with papers, and, opening a ledger, began to write down the answers to the very personal questions he asked me. That done to his satisfaction, he next opened a drawer, took out a little bag of money—and *handed me fivepence !*

“What—what’s this !” I gasped, absolutely flabbergasted, gazing upon the five pieces of copper incredulously. “What—what’s this ?”

“Alms money,” explained the porter.

“Alms money ! Why—who—— Look here, what place is this ?”

“The Ayuntamiento.”

The Town-hall ! Ah, so that was it. That explained. The fool porter thought I was a tramp broke to the wide—a pauper ! The Guardia, misunderstanding me, must have misinformed him.

“But, good heavens, man !” I cried, highly indignant, yet forced to laugh : “I’m not a pauper. I’m a—a *tourista*. Take your alms back. It’s not money I want. I’ve got plenty of my own—tons of it. Look.”

Producing my note-case I displayed before the bulging eyes of the porter more money than he had probably ever seen in his whole life, for he sank

“INSIDE RAPID!”

weakly back, overcome by the sight of the 100-peseta notes.

“Pardon, sir,” was all he could say. “Pardon. The Guardia led me to believe that you were in want. The mistake is all ours, sir. Pardon.”

“Oh, that’s all right, porter. Forget it. And now, can you direct me to an hotel?”

“Yes, sir. Certainly, sir. With pleasure, sir. Please to precede me, sir.”

At the hotel which he directed me to—the Fonda de Comercio—I was readily admitted and allotted a room: a big, bare, whitewashed chamber as clean as a dairy, electrically lighted, with one tiny window high up in the wall whence a dizzy, bird’s-eye view could be obtained of the wide land far, far below, lying dark and silent beneath the stars. It made one feel like a prisoner in a castle turret in the country of the clouds.

A doncella had shown me up, and when she made to retire I called her back and asked her when supper would be ready.

“*Dentro rápido, señor,*” was her strange reply: “*Dentro rápido!*”—“Inside rapid, sir. Inside rapid!”

Amused at this, I began changing my sweat-soaked shirt for a sweeter one, when it was that I discovered that both my arms were covered from shoulder to wrist with innumerable red spots like insect bites. But, although they itched somewhat, they were not insect bites. They were heat spots. The continual daily walking in intense heat was at last beginning to affect me. The sooner I reached Gibraltar the better!

Next morning I got away early. Following directions given me by the hotel people, I soon extricated myself from the warren of narrow lanes and wynds, winning out on to a breezy terrace-walk

that afforded breath-taking views of the underlying scene ; thence, dropping in zigzag fashion between peasant hovels perched precariously on the breakneck slope of the hill, I gained a rocky ravine down which a road (the one mentioned by the woodcutter the evening before) hurtled precipitously as a cataract to join the highway far away below. And so nearly perpendicular was the descent, and so rough and cut up the flinty way, that time and again I came near to meeting a cragsman's end. And had there been no wall along the opposite side of the highway at the foot, I should have been precipitated head-first into the river, for my momentum was such that it carried me down the last two hundred yards at a flying run.

A short distance along the highway a road branched off eastward across a stone bridge spanning this river—the Rio Barbate, which, flowing south, empties itself in the sea near Cape Trafalgar—so I took it, putting my longest leg foremost for Tarifa, five-and-twenty miles or more away.

For kilometre after kilometre that road ran straight ahead, rise succeeding rise in wave-like procession, through the midst of a wide rolling plain towards a range of distant hills. Woodlands, wherein birds sang and where the aromatic underwoods hummed and twittered with insect life, and parklands, where wildflowers and sweet grasses grew in rare profusion, alternately bordered the route. Save for a train of pack-mules a great distance ahead, and a cavalcade of panniered donkeys a great distance behind, I walked alone amid the abandoned solitude. And for hours and hours, in fact, until well on in the afternoon, the twin hills between which the white town of Vejer glistened in the sun like drifted snow, remained plainly visible to backward view.

Onward I progressed, by degrees outstripping the

woodlands and parklands and coming into a bleak desert region of marsh and pasturage, where cattle browsed and hogs wallowed and the only sign of human life was a remote hamlet of huts made of thatch.

Faint with hunger and tortured by thirst I trudged wearily across this desolate land—which, in the time of the Moors, had been a Paradise of fruits and flowers. Thoughts of food and drink goaded me like gadflies.

Mid-afternoon brought me under the range of hills towards which the road had been making all day ; and here, high up on the barren slopes, clung a scattered township of whitewashed cottages. But the aloofness of the place, coupled with its obvious poverty and the improbability of my being able to procure food therein, decided me against ascending to it. With my belly in my boots I continued along the hungry highway.

Presently the road turned sharply southwards, paralleling the range, through a pass in the foothills that gave access to a wild glen descending to the sea. And in this pass, thank the gods, there was a venta. But alas ! fickle fortune so contrived matters that there might just as well have been no venta.

“Have you the money to pay for it ?” demands the bartender, on my entering and requesting something to eat and drink for God’s sake.

“Certainly,” says I, planking down a fistful of silver and coppers on the counter. “Take a look at that.”

Picking out half a dozen coins, ha’pennies and pennies, the man examines them one after another, then pitches them back at me, his eyes ablaze.

“Get out !” says he, leaning threateningly across the bar. “Get out, or I’ll throw you out ! And take your bad money along with you—you German cheat !”

I looked at him, unable to believe my ears.

"What are you talking about, man! The money's good—all of it!"

"The money's bad—all of it—and you know it is. So get out, or I'll throw you out. —Go on, get out!"

"I'll be damned if I will!" I cried. "My money's just as good as any of your money—and maybe honestlier come by. You can't show me that it's bad!"

"Oh, can't I? Then what's that?—and that?—and that?" The bartender pointed to the coppers he had examined. "Do you call that good money?"

"Of course I call it goo—— Good heavens, what's this?" I exclaimed, as, picking up the half dozen coins, I discovered that all were foreign, that not one was Spanish. "I—I. Look here, I didn't know about this. Somebody's palmed them off on me. Ah, I know: the hotel people at Vejer!"

It was a proper coin collection. There were two French pieces, for 5 and 10 centimes respectively; an Italian piece, for 10 centesimi; a British ha'penny; a Portuguese piece, for 10 reis; and a twelfth-of-a-shilling States of Jersey piece. All were worn smooth, and, being the same size as Spanish copper money, at first glance appeared to be so. It was just my bad luck that the bartender had happened to pick out these particular coins, for the rest of the money was perfectly all right. But this he chose to disbelieve. He wouldn't even look at it. Stubbornly he refused to serve me with anything. There was no alternative, therefore, but for me to get out; which I did, cursing all money, good and bad, and fulminating against the sly hotel people at Vejer.

With my hunger and thirst increased a hundred-fold, I continued through the pass into the wild glen. High craggy hills towered on either side, and sparse woods clothed the restricted way, which in a long,

## THE HILLS OF AFRICA!

slow incline descended to the sea. A melancholy place it was, silent and sun-bleached, given over to the serpent and the vulture, with more than a hint of African savageness about it. It reminded me somehow of Sinbad the Sailor's Valley of Diamonds, so that I half-expected to stumble upon chunks of raw meat stuck full of precious stones, or see a roc-borne adventurer sail into it from the blue.

As I progressed down the defile it opened and widened to reveal at its far end, framed in a notch formed by the opposing hillsides, a triangle of dazzlingly blue water. And beyond this, half concealed by a swimming haze, could be discerned peaks of dusky hills, remote and ephemeral.

The hills of Africa !

Long I stood and gazed on their fascinating chain, looming so spectrally across the narrow sea. For a sight like this—the landfall of a continent so mighty and vast and old—is the sight of a lifetime. . . . Then down the long gorge I sped like the wind, heartened and jubilant, hunger and thirst forgotten, to where at last the craggy way ended and blue water flowed athwart.

Here was a wide beach of sand, with greensward dotted with palms and whitewashed cottages and cattle browsing. East and west the low coast curved out in headlands. Opposite, like the wizard mountains of Warlockland, the African hills came and went in purple haze, and the eye, following their course eastward, saw them terminate in a great bulky mass of barren rock facing a bay in the Spanish coast—the Bay of Gibraltar. It was a prospect magnificent enough. And over the yellow hills and the blue sea the westering sun poured its red-gold fire, while a warm wind stirred the fronds of the palm trees.

## LAP THE TWENTY-THIRD

### THE ROAD TO GIBRALTAR

Into Tarifa—Guide-book lore—A valley of cork trees—The Rock of Gibraltar—Arrival at Algeciras—The Fair—Round Gibraltar Bay—A fellow-Briton—Assessing the Spaniard—"You'll like Spain, only——"—At the Frontier Gates—Third degree—Crass stupidity—A truly infernal machine.

THE road, on issuing from the glen, swerved eastward along the curving coast for Tarifa, whose white walls could be plainly seen rising from the neck of a low headland, on the extreme point of which stood a lighthouse.

The way at first ran in the shadow of the coastal highlands, but presently these fell away inland, and thereafter I was traversing an open plain watered by a river, the Salado, where, in times long past, the blood of Vandal, Moor, and Christian flowed freely in fight, and where (on the Twenty-eighth of October, 1340—date to be deplored!) cannon were used in battle for the first time in Europe.

Sunset served to light me in through the picturesque Moorish gateway of Tarifa, and in a glamorous twilight I threaded the network of narrow cobbled lanes which the ancient town consists of nothing else but. Whitewashed houses with tiny windows, some guarded by iron grilles, rose on either hand; but of the veiled women whom I expected to see—having read in a not-so-old guide-book somewhere that Tarifeñas continue to conceal their faces in the Oriental fashion—I saw not a sign; the custom, apparently, has died out. And after wandering

around for half an hour, seeing the very little there was to be seen, I came out at the same place where I had entered in.

Several Civil Guards hung about here eating monkey nuts ; and one (a Civil Guard, not a monkey nut) who spoke English fairly well, took it upon himself to shepherd me to a *casa de huéspedes* outside the walls, where he assured me I should find accommodation ; for I had already tried the two hotels in vain. . . . And after a full-course supper I went straight to bed, the mirror in my bedroom having revealed to my startled gaze a face positively emaciated with fatigue and privation. . . .

Tarifa is the most Moorish town in Andalusia, and the most southerly town in Europe. It stands midway of the 40-mile-long Strait of Gibraltar, at the point nearest to the African coast, where the seaway is only twelve miles across. It dates from before Roman times. The Moors called it Tarifa after a Berber chieftain of that name. Our word 'tariff,' it is said, derives from Tarifa. The oranges of Tarifa, it is likewise said, are the smallest and sweetest in Spain. The town, once of great strategic importance, is completely enclosed within hoary, crumbling walls. There is a Tower and an Alcazar and a rocky peninsula with a fort and a lighthouse on it. Then there is that historical anecdote of Alonzo Guzman, who suffered his young son to be put to death rather than yield up the city to its Moorish besiegers. But I'll spare you that and further guide-book lore, and continue with my already too-long tale of touristic trials and tribulations.

Well, next morning, after breakfasting in a café—for at the *casa de huéspedes* not even the usual coffee and roll had been forthcoming—I departed from Tarifa.



Right from the city gate the road sprang in a series of aspiring loops and bends up the airy mountainside. Over vast barren slopes it coiled and climbed like a heaven-scaling dragon. The views it afforded of the underlying coast, and of the sea, and of the hills of Africa, quickened the heart and fired the blood. Save for kine and goats browsing on distant heights and in far depths, like ants for size, the tinkling of whose bells came to me thin and clear across miles of space, I had the wild hills to myself. And aloft, high ahead, a sky-shouldering region of craggy, desert peaks reared itself dark and awesome under banks of thundercloud.

Two or more hours' breathless climbing brought me to the stupendously elevated summit. From here the road then plunged into a wide, densely wooded valley, down whose length dropped a foaming cataract to the sea, and, crossing this water, it soared again on the opposite slopes to the valley rim, over which it disappeared.

As I plunged with the road down through the glenside glades and fern-carpeted clearings, I could not but observe that the tree trunks and larger boughs were peeled bare of their bark. Man's work, obviously. You could see how the denudation had been accomplished, too. Cleanly, neatly, circumcisions had been made, top and bottom, joined by a longitudinal cut, the bark being then prised off in a single large sheet, leaving the limb completely naked. And on looking to see what manner of bark this was that merited such removal, I discovered it to be not bark at all, but cork. Cork! The bark *was* cork, I mean. Gnarled and corrugated like ordinary bark, it was yet the identical substance which most of us are content to regard as a growth peculiar to bottle-necks.

Intrigued by this discovery I continued the descent

## THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR!

of the wooded slopes to the valley bottom, crossed the water, then climbed up and up until the forest of cork-trees thinned and petered out and the road disappeared over the bare valley rim.

By the clearness of the sky above this, I knew that a panoramic prospect awaited me here. And immediately on my cresting the summit, there it was, spread out far, far below like a relief map. A prospect in a million! A prospect of a wide, wide, blue, blue bay, sparkling in the sun, almost encircled by land: tawny, hilly land that curved spaciously round to end in a colossal bulk of barren rock that heaved itself, grand and grey, out of the sea, like a leviathan, like some mighty monster risen from submarine deeps to work the world woe.

The Rock of Gibraltar!

It looked so solid, so immovable, so—so British; one was somehow disappointed not to find it coloured red; it looked so familiar, too. Across the sea from it on the African shore a similar bulk of bald rock faced it: its twin, Gibil Muza. The Pillars of Hercules! And on the landward side it was connected to the Spanish mainland by a sandy spit so narrow and low as to be almost invisible, giving it the appearance of an island rock.

As I dropped down the long descent to the white town of Algeciras on the bay's near edge, I thought quite a lot about Gibraltar. I thought about the gun-galleries honeycombing its innards, and decided that the Rock was a concrete representation of Anti-Christ. And I fell to wondering if Christ has ever complained to God about Gibraltar, and, if He has, why God has refrained from blasting it asunder. Then, remembering that England's God is a God of Battles, Lord of England's Far-flung Battle Line, beneath Whose Awful Hand England holds dominion over Palm and Pine, and a Lord,

likewise, who is directly responsible for making that Land of Hope and Glory mighty, and Who is constantly being called upon, even by professed Christians, to make it mightier yet;—remembering that, I say, I ceased from wondering about Gibraltar's continuance, and devoutly thanked the Devil that I was not an Englishman.

“O England! long, long may it be ere the sun of thy glory sink beneath the wave of darkness! Though gloomy and portentous clouds are now gathering rapidly around thee, still, still may it please the Almighty to disperse them and grant thee a futurity longer in duration and still brighter in renown than thy past! Or if thy doom be at hand, may that doom be a noble one, and worthy of her who has been styled the Old Queen of the Waters! May thou sink, if thou dost sink, amidst blood and flame, with a mighty noise, causing more than one nation to participate in thy downfall!”

Thus spake one of England's sons, on beholding Gibraltar—George Borrow, who had the hardihood to travel throughout ‘darkest’ Spain distributing the New Testament. *The New Testament!*

On arriving at Algeciras I found preparations in full swing for the annual Fair, which was to begin that night. House-fronts were being repainted, streets were being hung with bunting and coloured electric lights, while on the edge of the town, in the Alameda between the Bull Ring and the Park, show-people were busy erecting booths and stalls and swings and roundabouts. Visitors, too, were already beginning to arrive. So, as a bull-fight was billed to take place next day, Sunday, and as the town was small and accommodation limited, I hastened to secure quarters for the week-end in a fonda where

## ALGECIRAS FAIR

*comidas y camas para viajeros* were a holiday speciality.

Algeciras is nothing much. It is a railway terminus, with a harbour between which and Gibraltar a ferryboat plies. The Rock itself looms directly opposite, five miles or so across the bay, and at night the myriad shimmering lights along its shore are a sight to see. I was told that searchlight displays take place regularly, more for show than for practice, to keep the Spaniard and others reminded that Gibraltar is English and that England is a Power. Which, if it be true, is a childish thing; on a par with a big bully menacingly flexing his muscles before a cripple in a bathchair. Nevertheless, the Rock looked good to me as I stood gazing at it on the night of my arrival in Algeciras. In the intervals between shooing off a painted young señorita—a perfect stranger—who persisted in draping herself round my neck and calling me her soul, I gave myself up to the contemplation of those shimmering lights. The lights of Home! And my heart missed a beat, and my eyes brimmed with tears at the thought that, in a little while, amongst English faces, with the English tongue sounding in my ear, under the English flag, I should sit at my ease and partake at last, at long, long last, of an English bacon-and-eggs breakfast!

Sunday saw Algeciras Fair in full go. The show-ground was the centre of attraction. Thither everyone flocked, to enjoy themselves after the melancholy Latin manner. The side-shows were similar to those at Cordova Fair. Gypsy dancers from Granada, in full native dress, and here and there a Moorish pedlar in fez and burnous, selling rugs and perfume, added the necessary picturesque touch to what I suppose I must call the animated scene. Also, besides the shows, on the adjoining common

where some reed-huts stocked with liquor had been temporarily erected, there was a horse-fair such as would have delighted Lavengro.

In the afternoon everybody attended the bull-fight. A full-dress *corrida* it was, with picadores and all the gadgets. Six bulls were killed; three performers were rendered *hors de combat*; and no less than nine horses staggered from the arena tripping over their trailing entrails.<sup>1</sup> Beside me in the Shade an English girl from Gibraltar fainted clean away. One bloodstained espada succeeded in butchering his beast only at the twelfth try. He *was* in a state—and so was the bull. The crowd nearly tore the Plaza apart. The performance of the other toreros, however, amply atoned; hats rained into the arena time after time, and the spectators yelled themselves voiceless. In short, it was a great bull-fight, and a most enjoyable time was had by all Spaniards.

At night a display of fireworks made a fitting end to the day. The various pieces had been erected on the terrace in front of the Plaza de Toros overlooking the fair-ground, which was jam-packed, and everything went off without a hitch; indeed, I have never seen a more successful show. I bet Gibraltar esplanade was crowded with spectators. They would get a magnificent view.

So ended the first day of Algeciras Fair: the last day but one in Spain for me.

At a late hour next morning I set out from the town on the last lap of my journey: the ten-mile stretch of road round Gibraltar Bay.

A not unpleasant stretch this is, running for the

<sup>1</sup> If it is true, as alleged, that, when a horse has not been killed outright by the bull, its wounds are sewed up and stopped with tow, in order that the wretched animal may again serve as bull-bait, then it is not impossible that these *nine horses* were *one and the same horse*!

most part through wooded countryside reminiscent of Old England. Two rivers—Guadarranque and Palmones—are crossed *en route* by iron bridges so eaten away with rust that it is a wonder how they hold together. While crossing them my heart was in my mouth ; for the metal plates underfoot gape with big holes through which you can see the river, and in places the iron is so rotten that you can kick your foot through it !

In time the road carried me round the head of the bay, and, skirting the town of San Roque on the left, ran downhill through the village of Campomento for Gibraltar, whose rocky mass, high in front, bulked gigantic through the heat haze.

In Campomento I stopped for a shave and a general clean-up, then resumed the road. But just beyond the village I accidentally collided with a cyclist, both of us measuring our length in the dust ; and the cheery manner in which he gave me back " Hell ! " for " Damn ! " made me invite him to the roadside for a smoke and a chat.

He was a fellow-Briton, setting out on a cycle-tour of Spain, heavily outfitted with camping paraphernalia, dressed like a Boy Scout, but wearing a pith sun-helmet and a pair of big blue goggles, and armed with two jack-knives and an automatic pistol fully loaded. It was a mystery how he had passed the Customs.

" But didn't they search you at all for firearms ? ", I asked him.

" At Gibraltar ? No. And even if they had, they would never have found the pistol."

" How's that ? "

" Because I had it hidden in the one place where they never dream of looking for pistols."

" You mean in your hip-pocket ? "

" Abso-bally-lutely ! "

"But what do you want, anyway, with an automatic?" I went on.

"For self-defence," the cyclist explained. "Spain, everybody knows, is in a state of unrest. The roads are unsafe. Bandits and gunmen——"

"Bandits and grandmothers!" I interrupted. "The roads of Spain are umpteen times safer than the roads of any other country in Europe. They are so safe, and quiet, and deserted that gunmen would be a god-send. . . . And this self-defence stuff. A pistol is not a weapon of defence. It is a lethal weapon, purposely made to pump people full of lead, lead, lead. If you really wanted to defend yourself, you would be wearing a bulletproof waistcoat. As it is, I shouldn't like to be in your shoes when Civil Guards or Assault Guards see you. They have a reputation for shooting *pistoleros* on sight."

"You seem to know a devil of a lot," said the cyclist to that. "Tell me, how do you assess the Spaniard?"

"I don't assess the Spaniard," I told him. "I take him as I find him. He's just as bad and as good and as rude and as polite and as kindly and as surly as anybody else. All this gush about him belonging to a polite race that's apart is the bunk."

"Is it true that he is always putting things off till *mañana*?"

"Now you're asking something. It's true that the word '*mañana*' is forever on his lips. Everywhere you go you hear '*mañana*' and '*pasado mañana*.' And, speaking for myself, I didn't come across one Spaniard doing what I would call work. Even when a Spaniard does do anything he seems to do it merely by accident. But the conundrum is this: if the Spaniard is the shiftless, work-shirking, procrastinating beggar that he sounds, and that he is reputed to be, how can we explain, to take one

YOU'LL LIKE SPAIN, ONLY-

instance of many, the miles upon miles of magnificent roads that have recently been built? If the Spaniard didn't build them, who did?"

"Don't ask me. —Isn't it true, then, that Spain is a backward country?"

"Backward? In some respects it's away ahead of the times! It's as modern as can be—positively futuristic in places. For one thing, you can't get walking for *teléfonos*. In the remotest villages, too—villages built of mud and straw—it's not unusual to find the very pigsties lit by electricity. Everywhere you go you find electric light. Britain is still in the Dark Ages in that respect. And you ought to see some of the cities. Why, Madrid makes Paris look like a rube town, and London like a back-street slum that has been condemned!"

"Are the hotels any good?"

"Exceptionally good and exceptionally cheap. The meals they serve up—when they *do* serve them up, for you've always got a devilish lot of waiting to do—are dandy. Good grub, good beds, central heating, *todo confort*. Democratic staffs, too. No lickspittles. I've seen chambermaids and waitresses dancing with the guests while dinner was being got ready. And you don't need to tip. Service is an item on your bill—ten per cent. Yes, you'll like Spain, only——"

"Only what?" asked the cyclist.

"——Only, you won't be allowed to see much of it in that hat and those goggles," said I. "The kiddies'll stone you to death!"

With that parting shot I resumed my way, coming presently to where the road runs between the sea-shore and a long row of little houses all alike. And on arriving at the end of these houses I found myself in the town of La Linea.

A busy little place this is, but dull and uninteresting. Here I stopped for dinner, then, walking



unchallenged by Spanish Customs officials through a gateway, I came out on to the open stretch of ground—the neck of land, or isthmus, joining Spain to Gibraltar—called the Neutral Ground, on the far side of which, at the foot of the great, overshadowing Rock, are the Frontier Gates.

A number of British Tommies, picturesque yet businesslike in khaki shorts and sun-helmets, leading horses, passed by as I walked across. And it was only then that I realised how very swarthy by comparison were the Spaniards amongst whom I had been sojourning for so long. For the complexion of each Tommy was startlingly pink; pink like a baby, and clean, oh, so clean. It was positively ludicrous. No wonder, I thought, that Spaniards had always known me for a foreigner on sight. The Northern blondness of my skin, despite its deep tan, must have been only too apparent to eyes accustomed to the olive of Latin complexions. Also the neatness, briskness, workmanlikeness, and disciplined carriage of these British Tommies contrasted most strikingly with the languor and slovenly bearing of Spanish soldiery. In the same way, I imagined, must the deportment of the trained legionaries of the Roman Empire have contrasted with the undisciplined mien of the ancient Britons.

“ ‘E’s one of them there bloomin’ ’ikers,” I overheard one of the Tommies say, indicating me, and I knew then that I was in truth come home at last.

The Frontier Gates are like gates into a public park. They stood wide open, and immediately within them I beheld, seated at a table in front of the gatehouse, a British bobby—a sergeant—dressed exactly like those in the Old Country. Yea, verily, I was come home at last in all truth, blast it!

With my back properly up, my teeth all on edge, and my blood running hot and cold at this gruesome encounter, I entered through the gateway, and,

### THIRD DEGREE

ignoring the presence of the menace in blue, kept on along the avenue, my ears cocked for the expected recall.

"Hi! Come back! I want you. Where do you think you're going?"

"I think I'm going to Gibraltar, sergeant," I replied, retracing my steps. "It lies somewhere hereabouts, I feel sure."

By this time Public Enemy No. 1 had been joined by Public Enemy No. 2, a military officer, and both had been joined by a Spanish Civil Guard. All three stood behind the table like a triumvirate about to condemn me to death for being alive.

"Passport," said the police sergeant.

"Passport," said I, handing him it.

"Got any money?" he next asked, obviously annoyed at finding the passport all in order.

"Yes." I let him feast his envious eyes on the contents of my wallet. If my eyes didn't deceive me, his fingers twitched.

"Where have you come from?" he went on.

"From Algeciras."

"By road?"

"Yes. I walked."

"You walked? H'm. It's very strange that you didn't come by ferry. There's a ferry, you know. You knew that, didn't you?"

"I certainly did."

"Then if you knew there was a ferry, why didn't you come by it? I can't understand why you chose to come all the way round by road—walking, as you say. It's very strange—very strange indeed."

He exchanged official glances with his accomplices, who nodded solemnly in agreement.

"Good God, man," I cried, out of patience with such idiotic humbug, "it isn't very strange at all! It *would* have been strange, very, very strange, if I had *not* come by road! I walked because I like

walking. I've walked all the way from Oviedo ! Is it against the law for a person to *walk* from Algeciras ? ”

“ Oh, no, no ; not at all, not at all,” returned the sergeant, climbing sheepishly down and pulling in his horns. “ It's not against the law. Not at all. Only, it's very—— Have you ever been in Gibraltar before ? ”

“ Never.”

“ What hotel do you intend to stop at ? ”

“ What hotel ? ”

“ Yes, what hotel. You intend to stop at a hotel, don't you ? ”

“ I suppose so.”

“ Then what hotel ? ”

It was hard to keep calm in the face of such crass stupidity. How the blazes could I tell the fool what hotel I intended to stop at, when I had never been in Gibraltar before ! Was he deaf—or just dumb ?

“ I don't know,” was all I could say.

The sergeant again exchanged official glances with his accomplices, who this time shook their heads at me. Then the third degree was resumed.

“ Where are you going on to from Gibraltar ? ”

“ Marseilles.”

“ How long do you intend to stay in Gibraltar ? ”

“ A day or two, I suppose.”

“ A day or two, you *suppose* ? Don't you *know* ? This is all very strange, very unusual. We must know by what steamer you intend leaving Gibraltar, and at what time, and on what day.”

“ But I've told you I've never been in Gibraltar before,” I explained heatedly. “ How should I know at what time what steamers leave on what days ? —What steamers are there ? ”

He couldn't tell me ! The military officer couldn't tell me ! The Civil Guard couldn't tell me ! . . . None of them knew ! And yet they expected *me* to know !

## A TRULY INFERNAL MACHINE

Following a period of embarrassed pause, during which the three uniformed morons pretended to consult gravely together in order to avoid meeting my scornful eye, the police sergeant wrote on a slip of paper the telephone number of the gatehouse, which he then handed to me.

"Immediately you arrive at your hotel," he said, "telephone me at this number and let me know the name of the hotel. And as soon afterwards as you can manage, let me know the date and hour of your departure, also the name of the steamer. Don't forget to do this. It is most important."

The military officer then came forward and asked me if I carried a camera or firearms. But on my assuring him that I did not, he appeared satisfied, whereupon I was allowed to go ; and so for the second time I began walking along the avenue, again with my ears cocked for the expected recall. For the fools had forgotten to search my pack !

"Hi ! Come back here a minute !" 'Twas the voice of the sergeant. "What have you got in that pack ?"

"I've got an infernal machine in that pack," I told him, returning to the table and rapidly undoing the straps of the receptacle in question. "An infernal machine, sergeant, of diabolical potency. *Voilà !*"

Before the three morons could stop me, I plunged a hand into the pack, withdrew the hellish instrument, and, swiftly adjusting and manipulating it, I let it off full in the face of the cursed cop.

The Rock's peace was ruptured. Gibraltar echoed to the sudden, obscene report.

And all that the sergeant could say, as he took the infernal thing in his trembling hand and examined it curiously, was :

"So th-this is a r-razzberry."

## LAP THE LAST

### ADIOS

Into Gibraltar town—The barrack-room atmosphere—Night life—*Cafés cantantes*—At sunset—Farewell, Spain.

WHEN at last I was allowed to proceed through the Frontier Gates, I followed the avenue to the place where it forks and at which a policeman in white armlets is stationed to direct the non-existent traffic. And from here a few minutes' walk along the shore road carried me past the passenger wharf, through Casemate Gates, as I believe they are called, and so into the long straggling Main Street of Gibraltar town.

The place disappointed me greatly. Instead of the bustling cosmopolitan town crowded with tourists and peoples of all nationalities in their different dress, which accounts that I had read had prepared me for, I found a mean little undistinguished one-horse burg, almost deserted, consisting of a long narrow central thoroughfare bisected at intervals by short narrow lanes, and lined with small hole-and-corner shops and low houses and offices and cafés with fronts painted in drab, depressing hues. And instead of the English faces and English tongues I had hoped to see and hear, I saw only Spanish faces and heard only Spanish tongues. Gibraltar was a Spanish town! Only very occasionally one met Englishmen, conspicuous by reason of their pink complexions and loud, boastful voices, and then you remembered to whom the place really belonged.

Along the length of Main Street I walked to the Alameda, the little public park, and thence along Rosia Road, which is a continuation of Main Street,

to the end where steps lead down into Camp Bay, in which soldiers were bathing. And here and there on the way I saw bastions and embrasures and what not, and snuffed the barrack-room atmosphere, which was pretty pungent, and met now and again squads of baby-complexioned Tommies—terribly, terribly young, mere boys—marching in file to and from the bathing beach with towels underarm. And I saw the craggy heights of the Rock above and the blue expanse of the bay below, and decided that a good desert rock had been irretrievably ruined, and that the Barbary apes did right in keeping to the inaccessible caverns over on the east side. For to fraternise with descendants who have descended so far below the level of the aboriginal stock as to wear uniforms and march mechanically in file, *would* be definitely *infra dig*.

Having seen all that I cared to see, I returned to the town and booked accommodation for the night at an hotel in Main Street, opposite the Exchange, where the hotel-keeper took it upon himself to 'phone the necessary particulars to the gatehouse. Then I went out for a stroll.

By then all the shops were shut up, and the little town, poorly lighted, wore a deserted, Sunday-night aspect. Bars, however, were in full swing, and for the first time since landing in Spain I encountered those *cafés cantantes*, or singing cafés, with which films have made all of us so familiar. Before audiences of soldiers, sailors, and civilians, Spanish señoritas sang and danced to the accompaniment of guitars and castanets. Castanets! Fancy my only now hearing, on British soil, too, the clicking of castanets; a sound I hadn't heard even once in all my thousand-mile journey through Spain!

In Spanish cities, certainly, there are *cafés cantantes*, but they are not at all conspicuous features of everyday Spanish city-life. Most of them are

hidden away in back streets beyond the ken of visiting foreigners. Hence, these singing cafés of Gibraltar, I am afraid, must be regarded as a racket, a sailortown stunt staged to attract visitors, and giving a totally false idea of what Spain is like. The Spanishness of the señoritas, too, is more or less a spurious thing, a fake, a libellous, highly-coloured caricature conveying as ludicrous a misrepresentation of the genuine article as a music-hall Scotch comic in kilts and hiccups conveys of the real MacKay. To one who has seen the reserved, dignified, stately-stepping señoras and señoritas of the sombre cities of Castile, these dancing dames of Gibraltar are mere vulgar defamers.

Next morning after breakfast—concerning which meal I choose to remain silent as the tomb, for there are joys in a man's life too private and intimate, too sacred and holy, ever to be divulged to another breathing soul—I hied me to a shipping agency and booked passage to Marseilles in a P. & O. boat—s.s. *Rajputana*—which had anchored in the bay and was to sail at sunset.

And so at sunset, leaning alone on the after rail of the liner, I took farewell of Spain. Enormous banks of blood-red cloud, ominous and terrifying, hung low over the land, boding, as it might be, ill for the Republic. But rapidly as the light failed the clouds rolled away, stars shone out, steady and serene in their untroubled heaven, and bright with the promise of peace everlasting. And slowly the low shores receded into the night, the Rock dwindled to a mere speck, then vanished; and there was left only the wake upon the wide waters of the Mediterranean.

THE END.

## GLOSSARY.

*Aber Sie sind ein Deutscher, nicht wahr?* But you are a German, are you not? (Ger.)  
*aceite* (ah-thay'-ee-tay), oil.  
*aceitunas* (ah - thay - ee - too'-nahs), olives.  
*Adiós* (ah-dee-ohs'), adieu.  
*adobe* (ah-do'-bay), a brick not yet burnt, baked in the sun.  
*aficionados* (ah-fee-thee-o-nah'-dohs), amateurs.  
*agua* (ah'-goo-ah), water.  
*aguardiente* (ah-goo-ahr-dee-en'-tay), brandy.  
*ahora* (ah-o'-rah), now.  
*á la Española* (ess-pan-yoh'-lah), in the Spanish fashion.  
*alameda* (ah-lah - may' - dah), public walk.  
*Alcalde* (ahl-kahl'-day), Mayor.  
*Alcaná* (ahl-kah-nah'), a place of shops.  
*alcarrazas* (ahl - kar - rrah'-thahs), water-pitchers.  
*alcázar* (ahl-kah'-thar), castle.  
*alcoba* (ahl - ko' - bah), alcove, bedroom.  
*aldeorrio* (ahl-dee-or'-ree-o), small, unpleasant village.  
*Alemán* (ah-lay-mahn'), German.  
*Algeciras* (ahl-hay-thee'-ras).  
*alguaciles* (ahl-goo-ah-thee'-less), constables.  
*almejas* (ahl-may'-hahs), mussels; shellfish.  
*almohadillas* (ahl-mo-ah-deel'-yahs), small pillows.  
*almuerzo* (ahl-moo-air'-tho), breakfast, served at lunch-time.

*alpargata* (ahl-par-gah'-tah), hemp-soled shoe.  
*¡Alto!* (ahl'-toh), Stop!  
*Amigo mío* (ah-mee'-go mee'-oh), My friend.  
*¡Anda!* (ahn'-dah), Get out of the way! Scat!  
*Andalucía* (ahn-dah-loo-thee'-ah), Andalusia.  
*Andaluz* (ahn'-dah-looth), Andalusian.  
*andanas* (ahn-dah'-nahs), tiers.  
*Andújar* (ahn-doo'-har).  
*años* (ahn'-yohs), years.  
*apellidos* (ah-payl-yee'-dohs), surnames.  
*aquí* (ah-kee'), here.  
*armas* (ahr' - mahs), arms, weapons.  
*¡Arre!* (ahr'-rray), Gee up!  
*arrieros* (ahr - rree - ay' - rohs), muleteers, carriers.  
*asalto* (ah-sahl'-toh), assault.  
*Auf denn!* Forward! (Ger.)  
*¡Ay de mí!* (ah'-ee day mee), Alas!  
*Ayuntamiento, casa de* (ah-yoon - tah - mee - en' - toh), Town Council, Town Hall.  
*balconcillos* (bahl - kon - theel'-yohs), small balconies.  
*banco* (bahn'-koh), bank.  
*banderilla* (bahn - day - reel'-yah), barbed dart.  
*banderillero* (bahn - day - reel-yay'-roh), dart-man.  
*barbería* (bar - bay - ree' - ah), barber's.  
*barbero* (bar-bay'-ro), barber.  
*¡Basta!* (bahs'-tah), Enough!  
*bebidas* (bay-bee'-dahs), drinks.



# TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

*bifstek* (bif-steck'), beef-steak.  
*Bilbao* (beel-bah'-oh).  
*bino* (bee'-noh), = *vino*, wine.  
*Bist du auf der Walze?* Are you on the road? (Ger.)  
*blanco* (blahn'-ko), white.  
*bocadillo* (bo-kah-deel'-yoh), sandwich.  
*bodega* (bo-day'-gah), wine-vault.  
*boquerones* (bo-kay-roh'-ness), anchovies.  
*Buenas noches* (boo-ay'-nahs no'-chais), Good-night.  
*Buenas tardes* (boo-ay'-nahs tar'-dais), Good-afternoon.  
*bueno* (boo-en'-oh), good.  
*Buenos dias* (boo-ay'-nohs dee'-ahs), Good-morning, Good-day.  
*Buen viaje* (boo-en' vee-ah'-hay), Bon voyage.  
*burra* (boor'-rrah), she-ass.  
*burro* (boor'-rroh), ass, donkey.  
*butaca* (boo-tah'-kah), fauteuil.

*caballero* (kah-bahl-yay'-roh), gentleman, horseman.  
*cabañas* (kah-bahn'-yahs), huts.  
*cabestro* (kah-bais'-troh), bell-ox.  
*Cádiz* (kah'-deeth), Cadiz.  
*café* (kah-fay'), coffee, café.  
*calle* (kah'-yay), street.  
*cama* (kah'-mah), bed.  
*caminero* (kah-mee-nay'-roh), roadman.  
*cantarillo* (kahn-tah-reel'-yoh), little pitcher.  
*capa* (kah'-pah), cloak.  
*capeador* (kah-pay-ah-dohr'), cloakman.  
*carnicería* (kar-nee-thay-ree'-ah), butcher's shop.  
*casa* (kah'-sah), house.  
*casilla* (kah-seel'-yah), cottage; keeper's lodge.  
*Castilla* (kahs - teel' - yah), Castile.  
*castillos* (kahs - teel' - yohs), castles.

*catorce* (kah-tor'-thay), fourteen.  
*cebada* (thay-bah'-dah), barley.  
*cédula* (thay' - doo - lah), warrant.  
*céntimos* (then' - tee - mohs), cents.  
*cerveceria* (thair-vay-thay-ree'-ah), beer-shop.  
*cerveza* (thair-vay'-thah), beer.  
*Chateau en Espagne*, Castle in Spain. (Fr.)  
*chico* (chee'-koh), little boy.  
*choza* (cho'-thah), hut.  
*chuleta* (choo-lay'-tah), chop.  
*chulo* (choo'-loh), performer in bull-fight.  
*churro* (choor'-rroh), fritter.  
*cigarillo* (thee-gahr-reel'-yoh), cigarette.  
*cinco* (thin'-koh), five.  
*Ciudad Real* (thee - oo - dahd' ray-ahl'), Royal City.  
*Civil* (thee-veel'), Civic.  
*coliflor* (koh-lee-flor'), cauliflower.  
*comedor* (koh - may - dohr'), dining-room.  
*comer* (koh-mair'), to eat.  
*comestibles* (koh - mess - tee-bleess'), eatables.  
*comida* (koh-mee'-dah), dinner.  
*con* (kon), with.  
*consumo* (kon-soo'-moh), excise tax.  
*con todo confort* (kon to'-doh con'-fort), with every comfort).  
*contrabandista* (kon-trah-bahn-dees'-tah), smuggler.  
*Córdoba* (kor' - doh - bah), Cordova.  
*corrida de toros* (kor-rree'-dah day to'-rohs), bull-fight.  
*coser* (ko-sair'), to sew.  
*cuadrilla* (koo-ahd-reel'-yah), team.  
*cuartel* (koo-ahr-tel'), barracks.  
*cuatro* (koo-aht'-roh), four.  
*cuenta* (koo-en'-tah), reckoning.

# GLOSSARY

*de* (day), of.  
*dehesa* (day-ay'-sah), pasture-land.  
*delanteras* (day-lahn-tay'-rahs), front seats.  
*demonio* (day - mo' - nee - oh), demon.  
*dentista* (den-tiss'-tah), dentist.  
*dentro* (den'-troh), inside.  
*desayuno* (day-sah-yoo'-noh), breakfast.  
*descanso* (dess-kahn'-soh), rest ; interval.  
*despoblado* (dess - poh - blah'-doh), desert ; uninhabited place.  
*día* (dee'-ah), day.  
*dicho* (dee'-choh), said.  
*diestro* (dee-ess'-troh), dexterous ; a skilful fencer.  
*diez* (dee'eth), ten.  
*diner*, to dine. (Fr.)  
*dinero* (dee-nay'-roh), money.  
*Dios* (dee-ohs'), God.  
*doce* (doh'-thay), twelve.  
*documentos* (doh-koo-men'-tohs), documents.  
*Domingo* (doh-min'-goh), Sunday.  
*doncella* (don-thel'-yah), maid.  
*dos* (doss), two.  
*droguería* (droh-gay-ree'-ah), drug-store.  
*drum*, tramp's tea can.  
*drum-up*, to make tea.  
*duenna*=*dueña* (doo-ain'-yah), married lady.  
*Dummkopf!* Blockhead! (Ger.)  
*edad* (ay-dahd'), age.  
*el* (ell), the.  
*ensalada* (en - sah - lah' - dah), salad.  
*entrada* (en - trah' - dah), entrance.  
*era* (ay'rah), threshing floor.  
*Escocés* (ess-ko-thess'), Scotch.  
*Escocia* (ess - ko' - thee - ah), Scotland.  
*espada* (ess-pah'-dah), swordsmen.

*España* (ess-pahn'-yah), Spain.  
*Español* (ess - pahn - yohl'), Spanish.  
*essen*, to eat. (Ger.)  
*estación* (ess - tah - thee - on'), station.  
*estoque* (ess-toh'-kay), rapier.  
*estos* (ess'-tohs), these.  
*fábrica* (fah'-bree-kah), factory.  
*faja* (fah'-hah), waist-band.  
*farmacia* (far-mah'-thee-ah), pharmacy.  
*fecha* (fay'-chah), date.  
*feria* (fay'-ree-ah), fair.  
*feu, le*, the fire. (Fr.)  
*fiesta* (fee-ess'-tah), feast, holiday.  
*fila* (fee'-lah), row, tier.  
*fonda* (fohn'-dah), inn.  
*Fort !*, Be off ! (Ger.)  
*Francés* (frahn-thess'), French.  
*Francia* (frahn' - thee - ah), France.  
*fresquita* (fress - kee' - tah), cool.  
*frito* (free'-toh), fried.  
*fruta* (froo'-tah), fruit.  
*fuego* (foo-ay'-go), fire.  
*fuelle* (foo-en'-tay), fountain.  
*gaffer*, under-foreman.  
*Gibraltar* (hee-brahl-tar').  
*Gijón* (hee-hon').  
*Gil Blas* (heel blass).  
*Giralda, La* (hee-rahl'-dah).  
*gitanos* (hee-tah'-nohs), gypsies.  
*gradas* (grah'-dahs), steps.  
*grande* (grahn'-day), big, great.  
*Granja, La* (grahn'-ha), The Grange.  
*Grosse Götter !* Ye gods ! (Ger.)  
*guardia* (goo - ahr' - dee - ah), guard.  
*guisado* (gee-sah'-doh), stew.  
*guisantes* (gee-sahn'-tess), peas.  
*habitación* (ah-bee-tab-thee-on'), room.  
*¿ Habla usted— ?* (ah' - blah oos-ted'), Do you speak— ?

# TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

<i>hacienda</i> (ah - thee - en' - dah), estate.	<i>lechertía</i> (lay - chay - ree' - ah), dairy.
<i>Hasta mañana</i> (ahs' - tah mahn - yah' - nah), Until to-morrow	<i>lechuga</i> (lay - choo' - gah), lettuce.
<i>hay</i> (ah' - ee), there is	<i>legua</i> (lay' - goo - ah), league.
<i>¿Hay — aquí?</i> (ah' - ee — ah - kee'), Is there a — here?	<i>León</i> (lay - on'), Leon.
<i>Heilige Nacht!</i> Holy Night! (Ger)	<i>libros</i> (lee' - brohs), books.
<i>helada</i> (ay - lah' - dah), frozen	<i>licores</i> (lee - koh' - ress), spirits.
<i>hermanas</i> (air - mah' - nahs), sisters	<i>limonada</i> (lee - moh - nah' - dah), lemonade
<i>hidalgo</i> (ee - dahl' - goh), noble - man	<i>loco</i> (loh' - koh), crazy, mad.
<i>Hijo mío</i> (ee' - hoh mee' - oh), My son.	<i>lotería</i> (loh - tay - ray - ree' - ah), lottery - ticket shop.
<i>¡Hola!</i> (oh' - lah), Hello! I say!	<i>Madrid</i> (mah - dreed').
<i>hombre</i> (om' - bray), man	<i>mañana</i> (mahn - yah' - nah), to-morrow
<i>horno</i> (or' - noh), oven	<i>manger</i> , to eat (Fr)
<i>hotel</i> (oh - tell'), hotel	<i>mantecado de fresa</i> (mahn - tay - kah' - doh day fray' - sah), strawberry ice
<i>howffs</i> , haunts	<i>mantilla</i> (mahn - teel' - yah), head-veil.
<i>huéspedes</i> (oo - ess' - pay - dess), guests	<i>manzanas</i> (mahn - thah' - nahs), apples
<i>huevos</i> (oo - ay' - vohs), eggs	<i>máquinas</i> (mah' - kee - nahs), machines
<i>Ich bin nicht ein Guardia</i> , I am not a Guardia (Ger)	<i>mariposa</i> (mah - ree - poh' - sah), rushlight
<i>Ich bin nur ein Wandersmann</i> , I am only a wanderer (Ger)	<i>marismas</i> (mah - riss' - mahs), marshes
<i>Inglaterra</i> (in - glah - tair' - rrah), England.	<i>matador</i> (mah - tah - dohr'), killer.
<i>Ja!</i> Yes! (Ger)	<i>matar</i> (mah - tahr'), to kill.
<i>jamón</i> (hah - mon'), ham	<i>mayor</i> (mah - yohr'), chief, main.
<i>¡Jesús!</i> (hay - soos'), Jesus! Common in Spain, where it is equivalent to "Dear me!" and "My!"	<i>melocotones</i> (may - loh - koh - toh' - ness), peaches
<i>joyería</i> (ho - yay - ree' - ah), jeweller's	<i>menores</i> (may - noh' - ress), minors.
<i>Juan</i> (hoo - ahn'), John	<i>mercado</i> (mair - kah' - doh), market.
<i>kilómetro</i> (kee - loh' - may - troh), kilometre.	<i>merluza</i> (mair - loo' - thah), hake.
<i>la</i> (lah), the.	<i>meseta</i> (may - say' - tah), stair - case landing.
<i>ladrones</i> (lah - droh' - ness), thieves.	<i>mezquita</i> (meth - kee' - tah), mosque
<i>leche</i> (lay' - chay), milk.	<i>Mit Gott</i> , With God. (Ger.)
	<i>Mit uns</i> , With us. (Ger.)
	<i>molinos</i> (moh - lee' - nohs), mills.
	<i>montes</i> (mohn' - tess), hills.
	<i>Morisco</i> , renegade Moor.
	<i>mozo</i> (mo' - tho), waiter.

# GLOSSARY

*muchacha* (moo - chah' - chah), girl.

*muchacho* (moo - chah' - choh), boy.

*Muchas gracias* (moo'-chahs grah' - thee - ahs), Many thanks.

*mucho* (moo'-choh), much, plenty.

*mula* (moo'-lah), she-mule.

*muleta* (moo-lay'-tah), flag, or lure, flourished by espadas at bull-fights.

*nacionalidad* (nah-thee-oh-nah-lee-dahd'), nationality.

*nada* (nah'-dah), nothing.

*naranjas* (nah - rahn' - hahs), oranges.

*natural* (nah-too-rah'), native.

*nieve* (nee-ay'-vay), snow.

*niña* (neen'-yah), girl-child.

*niño* (neen'-yoh), boy-child.

*nombre* (nohm'-bray), name.

*noria* (noh'-ree-ah), draw-well.

*norte* (nor'-tay), north.

*novillada* (noh-veel-yah'-dah), junior bull-fight.

*Nuestra Señora* (noo-ess'-trah sain-yoh'-rah), Our Lady.

*nueva* (noo-ay'-vah), new.

*nueve* (noo-ay'-vay), nine.

*o* (oh), or.

*ocho* (oh'-choh), eight.

*olla podrida* (ohl'-yah poh-dree'-dah), stew.

*once* (on'-thay), eleven.

*Orgaz* (or'-gath).

*oro* (oh'-roh), gold.

*pago* (pah'-goh), payment.

*palacio* (pah - lah' - thee - oh), palace.

*palmenwald*, palm forest. (Ger.)

*paloma* (pah-loh'-mah), dove, pigeon.

*pan* (pahn), bread.

*panaderia* (pahn-ah-day-ree'-ah), bakery.

*papel* (pah-pel'), paper.

*papeleria* (pah-pay-lay-ree'-ah), stationer's.

*para* (pah'-rah), for, etc.

*parador* (pah-rah-dohr'), inn.

*¡Pardiez!* (pahr-dee-eth'), By Jove!

*parque* (pahr'-kay), park.

*pasado mañana* (pah-sah'-doh mahn-yah'-nah), the day after to-morrow.

*pasaporte* (pah-sah-por'-tay), passport.

*paseo* (pah-say'-oh), promenade.

*patatas* (pah - tah' - tahs), potatoes.

*patio* (pah'-tee-oh), courtyard.

*pelota* (pay - loh' - tah), ball game.

*peluqueria* (pay-loo-kay-ree'-ah), hairdresser's.

*pensionistas* (pen-see-oh-niss'-tahs), boarders.

*peón* (pay-on'), labourer.

*peras* (pay'-rahs), pears.

*perro chico* (pair'-rroh chee'-koh), 'little dog' = 5-centimo piece.

*pescaderia* (pess-kah-day-ree'-ah), fishmonger's.

*pescado* (pess-kah'-doh), fish.

*peseta* (pay-say'-tah), Spanish franc.

*peter*, tramp's pack.

*picador* (pee-kah-dohr'), pike-man.

*picaro* (pee'-kah-roh), picaroon.

*picos* (pee'-kohs), peaks.

*pinar* (pee-nahr'), pine-grove.

*pistolero* (piss - toh - lay' - roh), gunman.

*plaza* (plah'-thah), square; market-place.

*Por aquí* (por ah-kee'), This way.

*¡Por Dios!* (por dee-ohs'), For God's sake!

*pordiosero* (por - dee - oh - say' - roh), beggar; literally 'for-godsaker'.

*posada* (poh-sah'-dah), inn.

# TRAMP-ROYAL IN SPAIN

*posadero* (poh-sah-day'-roh), innkeeper.

*postres* (pohs'-trais), dessert.

*precio fijo* (pray'-thee-oh fee'-hoh), fixed price.

*procedencia* (proh-thay-den'-thee-ah), place whence one has come.

*profesión* (proh-fay-see-on'), profession.

*pronto* (pron'-toh), promptly.

*provincia* (proh-veen'-thee-ah), province.

*pueblo* (poo-ay'-bloh), village, town.

*puente* (poo-en'-tay), bridge.

*puerta* (poo-air'-tah), door.

*puerto* (poo-air'-toh), port ; hill-pass.

*puntillero* (poon-teel-yay'-roh), dagger-man.

*que* (kay), who, what, that, which.

*quemadero* (kay-mah-day'-roh), burning-place.

*¡Qué no!* (kay noh), Certainly not !

*queso* (kay'-soh), cheese.

*¿Quién es?* (kee-en' ess), Who goes there ?

*¿Quién quiere—?* (kee-en' kee-ay'-ray), Who wants—?

*Quijote* (kee-hoh'-tay), Quixote.

*quince* (keen'-thay), fifteen.

*rápido* (rrah'-pee-doh), rapid.

*ratonocito* (rrah-toh-noh-thee'-toh), little mouse.

*real* (rray-ahl'), 25 centimos ; royal.

*refresco* (rray-fress'-koh), cooling drink ; refreshment.

*revendedores* (rray-ven-day-doh'-ress), retailers.

*rey* (rray'-ee), king.

*ruffer*, bed in a bush.

*¿Sabe?* (sah'-bay), Savvy ?

*sagra* (sah'-grah), open country.

*salchichones* (sahl-chee-choh'-ness), sausages.

*salida* (sah-lee'-dah), exit.

*salud* (sah-lood'), salvation.

*sardinas* (sahr-dee'-nahs), sardines.

*sartén* (sahr-ten'), frying pan.

*sastre* (sahs'-tray), tailor.

*seguridad* (say-goo'-ree-dahd), security, safety.

*seis* (say'iss), six.

*semana* (say-mah'-nah), week.

*señor* (sain-yor'), sir, mister.

*señora* (sain-yoh'-rah), madam.

*señorita* (sain-yoh-ree'-tah), miss.

*Señor y caballero*, Lord and knight.

*sereno* (say-ray'-no), night watchman.

*servicio* (sair-vee'-thee-oh), service.

*setzen*, to sit. (Ger.)

*Sevilla* (say-veel'-yah), Seville.

*sí* (see), yes.

*sierra* (see-air'-rrah), ridge of serrated peaks ; mountain chain.

*siete* (see-ay'-tay), seven.

*sobre* (soh'-bray), over, above.

*sol* (sol), sun.

*soldado* (sol-dah'-doh), soldier.

*sombra* (som'-brah), shade.

*sombrero* (som-bray'-roh), hat.

*sopa de pan* (soh'-pah day pahn), bread soup.

*sopa espesa* (ess-pay'-sah), thick soup.

*spike*, workhouse casual-ward.

*Sprechen Sie Deutsch?* Do you speak German ? (Ger.)

*Spreekt U Hollandsch?* Do you speak Dutch ? (Dch.)

*suerte* (soo-air'-tay), phase of bull-fight.

*teléfonos* (tay-lay'-foh-nohs), telephones.

*tendidos* (ten-dee'-dohs), ring-side seats.

*Tengo* (ten'-goh), I have.

## GLOSSARY

*tienda* (tee-en'-dah), shop.  
*tint*, lost.  
*tinto* (teen'-toh), red.  
*Toby, the*, the road.  
*torero* (toh - ray' - roh), bull-fighter.  
*toril* (toh'-reel), bull-pen.  
*toro* (toh'-roh), bull.  
*torre* (tor'-rray), tower.  
*tortilla* (tor-teel'-yah), omelette.  
*tourista* (too-riss'-tah), tourist.  
*tramp - major*, workhouse porter's assistant.  
*trece* (tray'-thay), thirteen.  
*tres* (tress), three.  
*tú* (too), thou.  
  
*uno* (oo'-noh), one.  
*usted* (oos-ted'), you. Generally written *V.* or *Vd.* = *Vuestra merced*, Your honour.  
*Usted perdone* (oos-ted' pair-doh'-nay), Excuse me.  
*uvas* (oo'-vahs), grapes.  
  
*vacada* (vah-kah'-dah), bull-breeding establishment.  
*vagabundo* (vah-gah-boon'-doh), tramp.  
*¡ Válgame Dios !* (vahl'-gah-may dee-ohs'), Good God !  
*valiente* (vah - lee - en' - tay), valiant.

*Vaya usted con Dios* (vah'-yah oos-ted' kon dee-ohs'), Go with God.  
*vecino* (vay-thee'-noh), neighbour.  
*vega* (vay'-gah), plain.  
*veinte* (vay'-een-tay), twenty.  
*venta* (ven'-tah), inn.  
*ventero* (ven-tay'-roh), inn-keeper.  
*ventorillo* (ven-toh-reel'-yoh), hedge tavern.  
*Verstehen Sie nicht ?* Don't you understand ? (Ger.)  
*vestidos* (vess - tee' - dohs), clothes.  
*viajero* (vee - ah - hay' - roh), traveller.  
*vieja* (vee-ay'-ha), old.  
*viento* (vee-en'-toh), wind.  
*vino* (vee'-noh), wine.  
*vin rouge*, red wine. (Fr.)  
*vuelta* (voo-ell'-tah), turn.  
  
*Warum folgen Sie mir ?* Why are you following me ? (Ger.)  
*Was ist das ?* What is it ? (Ger.)  
*Was wollen Sie ?* What do you want ? (Ger.)  
*Willkommen*, Welcome. (Ger.)  
*Woher kommen Sie ?* Where do you come from ? (Ger.)  
  
*y* (ee), and.  
*yo* (yoh), I.

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